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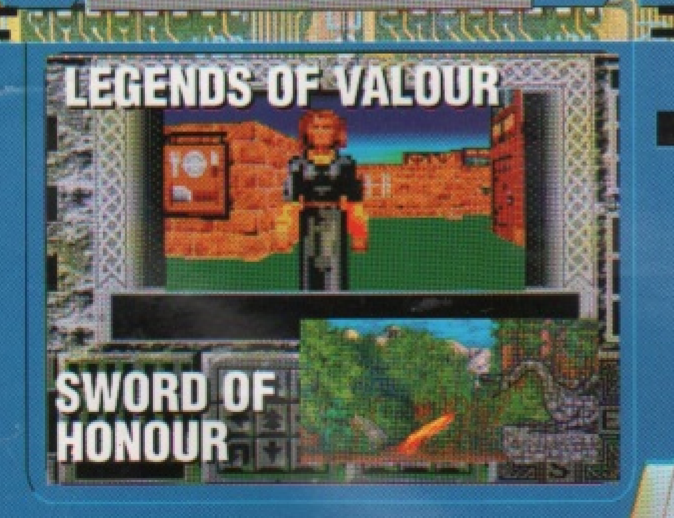
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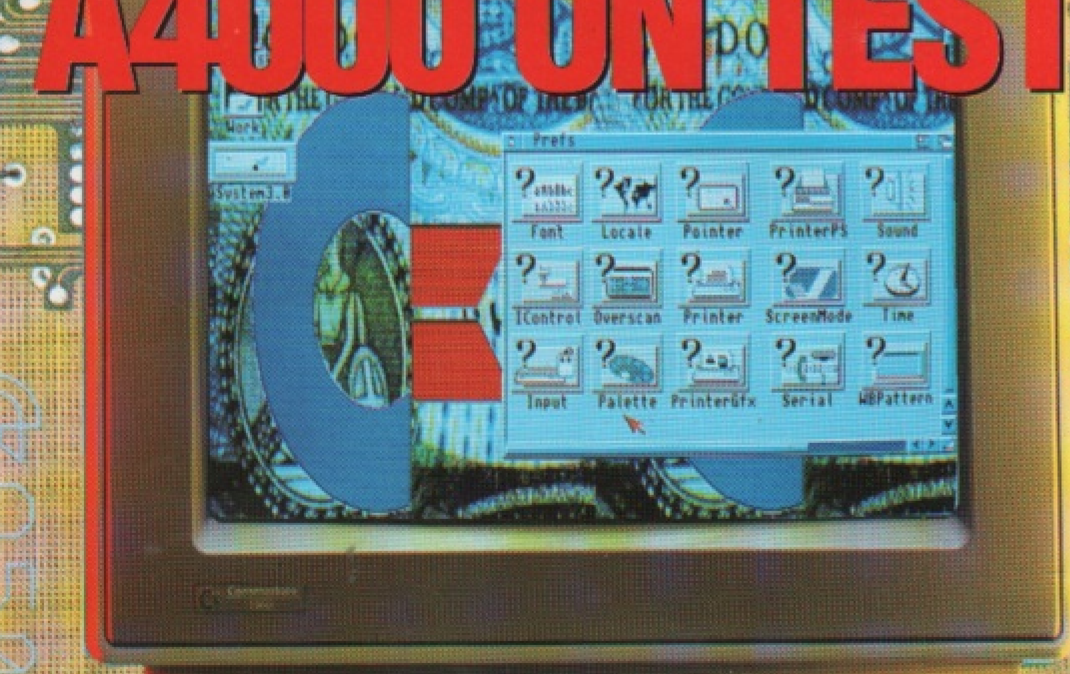


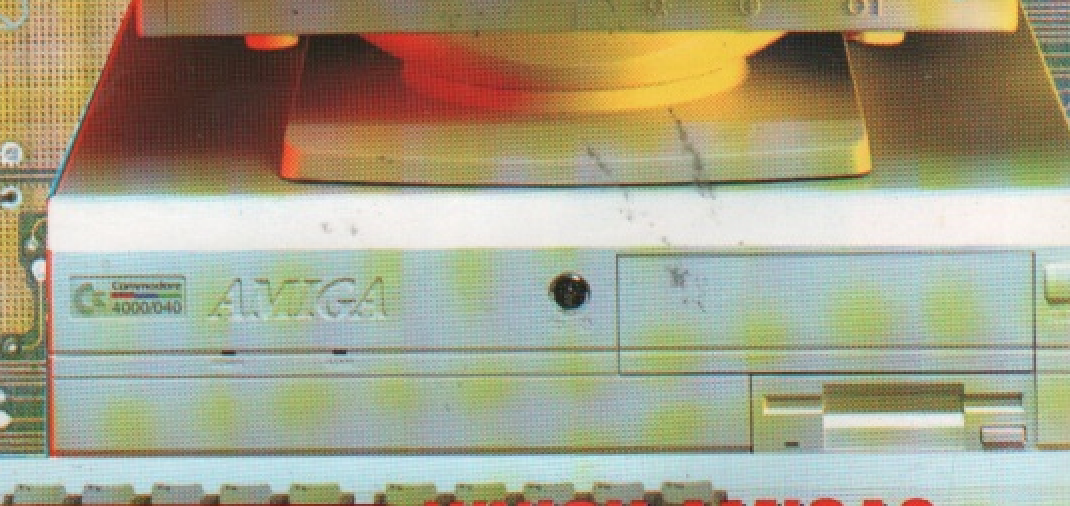
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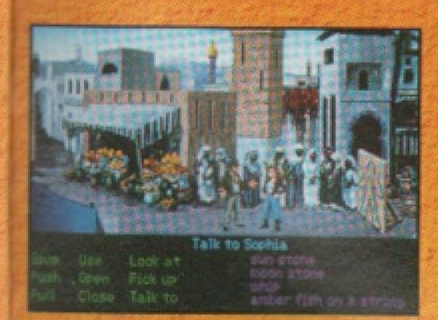
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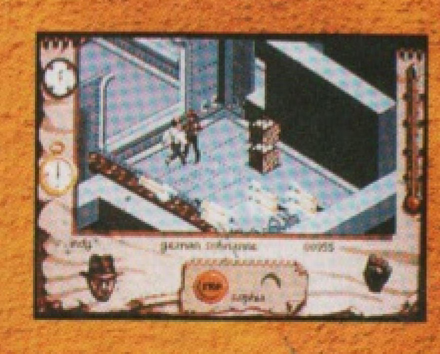
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Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the gameplay and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specification.

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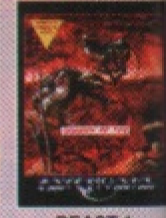
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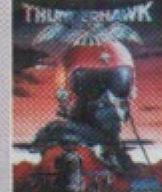


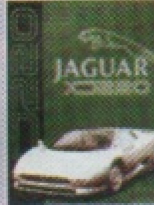




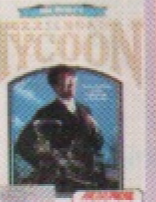



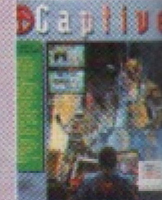
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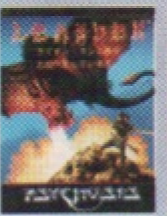


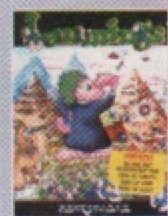


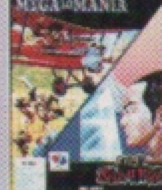
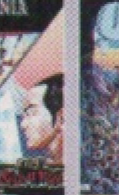
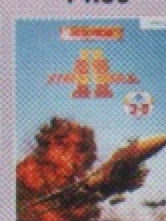
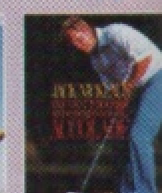



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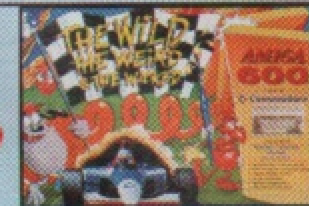
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CONTENTS



19 A4000 REVIEW

It has been subject to speculation, revelation, denial and counterdenial, but at last it's finally here! Manufactured in their new plant in Scotland, Commodore's latest addition to the Amiga range, the A4000, is now ready and willing to take on an expectant public.

But which of the amazing features that were bandied about in the press eventually made it to the machine? Is it really not only the best Amiga but the best home computer currently available?

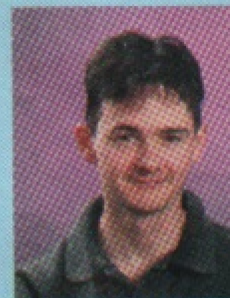
As usual the CU team have given the machine a thorough going over and are ready to give their assessment of the most powerful Amiga ever. Every addition and change is detailed inside, with comments on how this will affect the future of home computing.

With the new machine comes a new version of the operating system. Is Workbench 3 worth upgrading to? We take it apart step-by-step, detailing new features all the way.

We also include comment from industry figures who consider the market impact of this new machine. After this, where can Commodore go next?

OFF THE CUFF

EDITORIAL


Dan Slingsby – Editor

The months of speculation are over. The A4000 has finally arrived. After breaking the story last month, we've scooped our competitors yet again with the very first benchtest of the new machine. Starting on page 19, we've got a five-page world exclusive review of the new A4000 as we put it through its paces.

I have to say it's a marvellous machine and the excitement as we unpacked the new Amiga for the first time was immense. The best news, however, is that the full-blown 120Mb version will cost a mere £2099. With such a competitive price point, the Amiga's rebirth as a state-of-the-art home computer is well underway. Apparently, there are two more models on the horizon: a mid-range Amiga aimed at the enthusiast/committed gamer and probably coming in at under £1000 and a super machine (the A8000 – subject to Commodore deciding on yet another name change) with an even higher spec than the A4000. We wait with baited breath.

Moving on, we've got another action-packed issue this month. The first of our Amiga Guides appears, a free 32-page magazine which, over the coming months, will build up into the definitive guide for the Amiga. This month we're concentrating on the wealth of free software that's available from the many Public Domain libraries. Future issues will be looking at graphics, music, programming, DIY projects, and lots more besides. Amiga Guide is an exclusive supplement to CU Amiga and I look forward to receiving your thoughts and suggestions on the title. Hopefully, with your input, we can make it quite special.

On the game front we've got an exclusive review of Ocean's *Lethal Weapon*, backed up by other such goodies as *Curse of Enchantia*, *Assassin* and the Amiga conversion of *Road Rash*.

There's lots more besides, so enjoy the issue. See you next month.

SPECIALS

20 LETHAL WEAPON



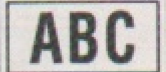
Ocean's latest platform romp is based on the amazingly successful Lethal Weapon films starring Mel Gibson and Danny Glover. Featuring four huge levels with scenarios culled from all three movies, there's action aplenty as you aim to defeat the evil hordes pitted against you. Destined to be a contender for the number one spot this Christmas, we've scooped an exclusive review of the new game. To find out if it's any good, turn to page 52 now!

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GET SERIOUS

PRODUCTIVITY REVIEWS . PRODUCTIVITY REVIE .

As well as scooping the Amiga world with our exclusive review of the A4000, we've got a packed 'Get Serious' this month with a look at 24-bit Graphic cards, modems, databases, art packages, Mac and PC emulators, an A600 Ram expansion, the latest CDTV releases, and sampling hardware. Phew. And as if that wasn't enough to keep you going we've also got the final part of our CD feature from last month, Art Gallery, and Graphics DIY.



Gold Disk's Office 2, page 98.



CD Demo Collection, page 97

SCREEN SCENE

GAME REVIEWS . GAME REVIEWS . GAME REVIE

Ocean's big new movie licence, *Lethal Weapon*, is our lead off review with the Amiga conversion of *Road Rash* also making its debut. Team 17's *Assassin* is finally released after months of publicity – is it as good as the hype would have us believe? There's also the sequel to *Pinball Dreams* – *Pinball Fantasies* – and Millennium's *Rome* takes the player back to the time of the Roman Empire.



Road Rash smashes onto our review pages. Turn to page 67.



Have we flipped over *Pinball Fantasies*? Find out inside, page 75.

COVERDISKS

As it's November, we've decided to have our own fireworks display with two explosive disks. The first offers an £80 program and a nifty personal organiser, the second two brilliant game demos.



DISK 44

On the first of our two disks, we're giving away not one but two professional quality utilities. First off there is the acclaimed Oxxi-Aegis animation system, *Videoscape 3D*. Create your own objects and render them before creating an astoundingly fast animation. Objects can be built up using the tools provided, coloured and given motion paths independently from the camera angle. We've managed to cram the two disks onto one for you to unarchive at your leisure, courtesy of our enhanced user-friendly decrunching scripts.
Amazingly we managed to find enough room to include *Organised* – an incredibly useful personal data system which will prevent you from ever missing our on-sale date again!



DISK 45

On our completely wonderful second disk you'll find an absolutely huge playable demo of US Gold's *Legends of Valhour*. Designed by Kev '*Corporation*' Bulmer, the demo lets you explore the ancient walled city of Mitteldorf, sample the local ales, have a bet at the races and lots more besides. This just has to be the biggest demo we've ever given away and you could quite happily spend hours roaming the streets conversing with the local inhabitants. But then, if you did that, you'd miss out on getting to grips with *Sword of Honour*, our second playable demo from the newly launched Global Software. In this, you take control of a feisty sword-wielding ninja. At your disposal are a lethal combination of high-kicks and punches to help you overcome the game's many foes.

THINK OF IT AS A WAY OF LIFE

JOURNALISTS see new titles every week, each one claiming to be the best of it's kind, to date. Yet at the recent European Computer Trade Show it was the journalists themselves that could be found singing the praises of one new title in particular - LEGENDS OF VALOUR.

KEVIN BULMER (The Designer of Corporation) and IAN DOWNEND the creators of LEGENDS OF VALOUR, were literally jostled off their feet as writers, retailers and fellow programmers sought to experience what one prominent industry figure called "A game that's more a way of life-utterly extraordinary."

Demo disks can only scratch the surface, screenshots in magazines could never do the astounding graphics justice (that's why you'll see none here). The only way to really find out what all the fuss is about is to experience it for yourself. LEGENDS OF VALOUR - The Dawning will be available on Amiga, ST and PC very soon.

Ask your retailer for more details or send a S.A.E. to Danielle Woodyatt at the address below for an information pack.





U.S. Gold Ltd, Units 2/3 Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham. B7 6AX. Tel 021 625 3366.

Legends of Valour
Volume I - The Dawning

(OR DEATH)

SPECIAL EDITION
AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED PERIOD ONLY

Containing: A Unique A2 Poster • A 'Digitise Your Own Face' Offer Allowing you to actually star in Legends of Valour.



HINTS TIPS 'N' HELP CALL THE GOLD PHONE: SPELLJAMMER • PROPHECY OF THE SHADOW • THE SUMMONING • DARK SUN • EYE OF THE BEHOLDER • LEGEND OF DARKMOON (EYE OF THE BEHOLDER II) • DRAGONS OF FLAME • HEROES OF THE LANCE TEL: **0839 654 139** OPERATION STEALTH • ANOTHER WORLD • FLASHBACK • CRUISE FOR A CORPSE TEL: **0839 654 284** LUCASFILM HELPLINE • LECHUCK'S REVENGE (MONKEY ISLAND 2) • INDIANA JONES (LAST CRUSADE & FATE OF ATLANTIS) • ZAK MCKRACKEN • MANIAC MANSION • LOOM • SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND • BATTLE OF BRITAIN TEL: **0839 654 123 INFORMATION LINE: 0839 654 124** • LEGENDS OF VALOUR TEL: **0839 993 366** • ACCESS HELPLINE: AMAZON TEL: **0839 654 394** • SIR TECH HELPLINE: CRUSADERS OF THE DARK SAVANT TEL: **0839 994 477**
Service provided by U.S. GOLD LTD., UNITS 2/3 HOLFORD WAY, HOLFORD, BIRMINGHAM B6 7AX. If you are under 18 please get permission to use the telephone. Calls cost 36p per minute cheap rate, 48p per minute all other times.

CDTV TAKES OFF AT LAST

When Steve Franklin stepped down from the helm of Commodore earlier this year, he'd managed to transform the fortunes of the Amiga from a struggling machine into the best-selling home computer in the UK. Since taking charge of the CDTV, the man with the Midas touch has radically overhauled the company's marketing strategy aiming the machine firmly at existing Amiga owners. 110 titles have already been released for the machine with another 60 ready for release over the next few months. These include CD-specific titles such as *Sherlock Holmes*, *TV Sports Football*, *Wing Commander* and a much-enhanced *Sensible Soccer*. In the new year we'll also be treated to the launch of Psygnosis' *Microcosm* game which looks likely to be the new benchmark for CDTV products.

The latest figures available show that 12,000 CDTV units have been sold in the UK, with 10,000 apiece in Germany and Italy. It's hoped that after Christmas another 40,000 units will have been sold across Europe. With projected sales of 20,000 A570s also being sold by the new year, publishers could be looking at an installed base of 100,000 users by the start of 1993. And then, hopefully, we really should start to see the CDTV take off.



DIRK THE DARING

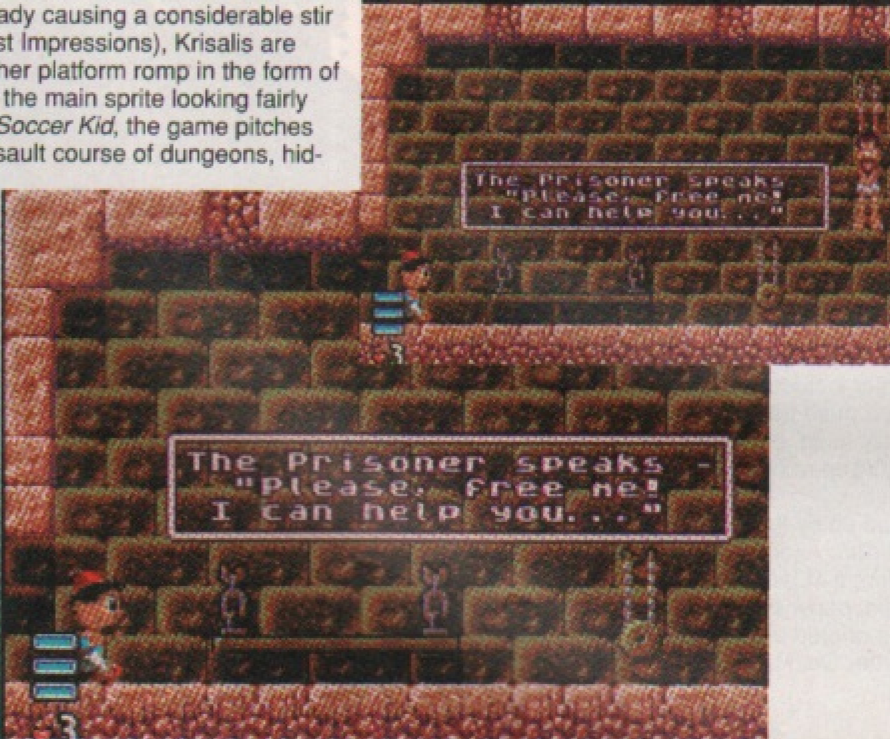
After rescuing his beloved Daphne from the castle of the evil Dragon Singe, nearly coming a cropper with The Shapeshifter as he made his escape, Dirk the Daring is back again, in *Dragon's Lair III*. This time, the witch Mordread has kidnapped not only Daphne, but Dirk's kids too!

The third in the graphically stunning *Dragon's Lair* series promises to be the best yet, coming on over six disks with 60 scenes, featuring full screen animation and buckets of sampled sound. The brilliant cartoon graphics of the previous instalments have been maintained, if not improved for the third game. Whether the controversial gameplay has progressed, we'll have to wait and see. Contact Empire Software on 0268 541126.



ARABIAN DELIGHTS

With *Soccer Kid* already causing a considerable stir (see this month's First Impressions), Krisalis are ready to launch another platform romp in the form of *Arabian Nights*. With the main sprite looking fairly similar to the star of *Soccer Kid*, the game pitches the player into an assault course of dungeons, hidden rooms and platforms aplenty. The action is set over multiple levels with some of the graphics reminiscent of Titus' platform romp, *Titus the Fox*. Everything is looking terribly good already, despite Krisalis claiming that the gameplay is going to be radically overhauled before its release in time for Christmas. For more info, ring Krisalis on 0709 372290.



SPEEDY DEMON

Joystick innovators Konix have come up with some pretty natty widgets in their time, but none has been as enduring as their SpeedKing joystick. Since the original, it has spawned a few offspring, the latest of which is the SpeedKing Analogue. Based on the original 'ergonomic' design, developed to fit snugly into the palm of the hand, the analogue version emulates the mouse, and so sports two fire buttons along with the stick. Unlike most joysticks which are either on or off, this gives you control over the degree of movement, rather than just the direction. A switch at the front toggles the automatic stick centring on and off. There's also provision to calibrate the stick, with a button that allows you to redefine the centre position. The SpeedKing Analogue is available now, priced at £14.99. Contact Konix on 0495 350101

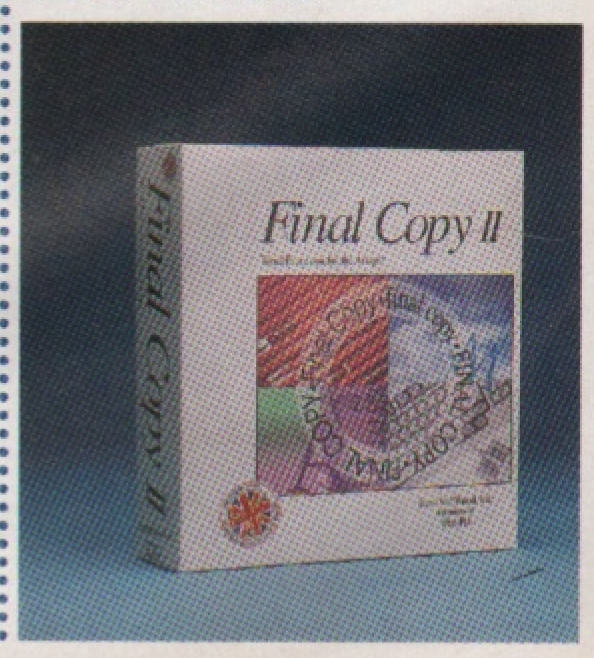


Is the SpeedKing the only stick that will help you get past the third level of *Zool*?

THE LAST SEQUEL

On the way from SoftWood Inc is the successor to their word processor *Final Copy*. *Final Copy II* will sport a massive range of improvements over the original, as it develops from a straight word processor, into something approaching a fully-fledged DTP package.

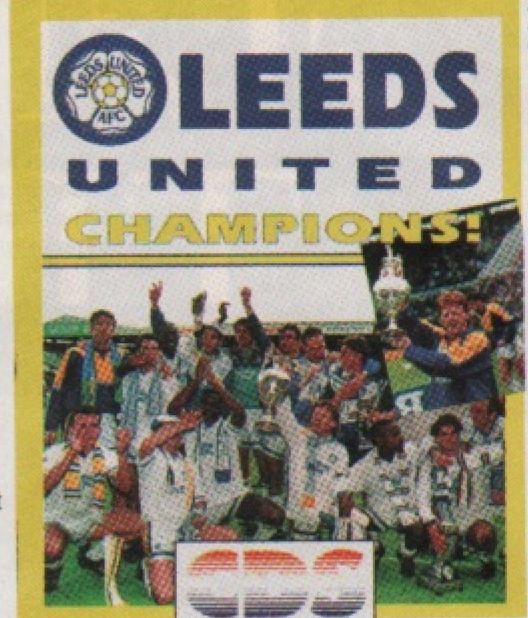
It will now feature outline fonts, with point sizes ranging from 4 to 300; that's over 4 inches high! We're promised that these fonts will be compatible with any Workbench-supported graphic printer, on any Amiga running Workbench 1.3 or higher. It will also have its own structured drawing tools, and will be able to import and print out graphics within documents. Advanced text handling capabilities will include automatic hyphenation, for neater justification, and the ability to lay text over graphics. It will also offer Postscript output, a British-English thesaurus and spell-checker dictionary. Contact Harwoods on 0773 836781.



'ERE WE GO AGAIN

As if it wasn't bad enough that Leeds took the Championship last season, we're now getting the fact rubbed well and truly in our faces with the news of a Leeds United management sim. Developed by Tony Huggard, the force behind *Football Director* and *Football Director 2*, the game will be released by Entertainment International and promises a staggering 729 tactical combinations as you seek to guide your team to the top of the Premier League and win the European Champions Cup. Strangely, the game's press release and packaging boldly claim that the idea is to take Leeds to the top of Division One – do they know something we don't? Let's hope so.

In all there are 9 trophies to win, and all the usual features you'd expect from such a game are included. You'll be able to hire and fire staff, mortgage the ground or take out a loan, send scouts to look for promising players, train a youth squad, negotiate wages and contracts, raise ticket prices, insure your squad against injury and lots more besides. I just hope the game's shelf-life isn't as short as Brian Clough's tenure at Elland Road – 44 days for statistic freaks! More info on 0268 541126.



LIVING ON VIDEO

Good news for videophiles: The Soft Alternative's *Big Alternative Scroller* is about to be succeeded by a sequel. The formerly simplistic video titling package is receiving a complete overhaul.

Improvements include a doubling of available colours in hi-res mode, bringing the total to eight. Different fonts can now be used in the same sequence, and it now supports mouse control. Wipes and fades can be used to switch from one title to another, and text can now appear in simulated tele-type style. ASCII text and IFF brushes can be loaded in from disk, and logos can now be scrolled with the text. Four colour fonts, anti-aliased fonts and outline fonts are promised on a free supplementary disk. *Big Alternative Scroller 2* will retail at £80.00. Owners of *BAS 1* can upgrade for £30.00. For mor info contact The Soft Alternative on 0533 440041.

BEND IT, STRETCH IT



The next chapter in 24-bit image processing is about to unfold. Morph Plus, from ASDG, looks as if it could be the best softwåre package yet.

According to ASDG, *Morph Plus* is 3 to 11 times faster than any of the competition. Among its available distortion techniques are enlargement, squishing, 'frobbing', wave and ripple effects (which can generate multiple ripples from various points), spherical warping and wrapping, rotation, and its trump card, morphing one image into another, a similar effect to that used at the end of Michael Jackson's 'Black or White' video.

Morph Plus also accepts standard IFF files, and includes *FRED*, the same animation system that comes supplied with *Art Department Professional*. See how it shapes up in the full review next issue. Contact HB Marketing on 0753 686000.

NEW AMIGA PLANNED (YET AGAIN!)

Yes, it looks like yet another new Amiga, tentatively titled the A1200, is waiting in the wings. Authoritative sources suggest the machine will be aimed squarely at the games market with a very low price. Details are scarce, but CU expects the machine to be launched before Christmas with a better spec. than the existing A600 and there's a strong possibility that an enhanced version of *Wing Commander* will be bundled with it. It's expected that the machine will be Commodore's new flagship and be promoted as 'an aspirational home computer'. More news soon.

KICK OFF 3 DELAYED

It appears that Anco have had to delay the launch of *Kick Off 3* due to technical difficulties. If you were a winner in our recent scratch card competition, Anco will be writing to you soon to either offer you an alternative prize/cash discount or ask if you would rather wait until *Kick Off 3* appears. If you wôuld rather have an alternative prize or a discount off some other piece of software (from the current top five Amiga games), Anco will then arrange this. We hope no one has been too inconvenienced by this promotion. *Kick Off 3* will now appear in the new year (weather permitting).

SCAN-DALOUS SCANNERS

New from Gasteiner Technologies is the Gasteiner Hand Scanner. With a scanning width of 105mm, it can produce 32, 64 or 128 grey scales, which according to Gasteiner, ensures almost identical black and white duplication. The scanning resolution is switchable between 100, 200, 300 and 400 dots per inch. There are also three photo modes and a text mode. The scanner is supported by a two-part software package, consisting of Migraph Scan & Save Plus, and Merge It, making it all fully Amiga compatible. The complete hardware and software package retails at £79.95 (plus £3.59 p+p). For more info contact Gasteiner Technologies on 081 365 1151.

ALIEN BREED SPECIAL EDITION

It had to happen. After years of suffering endless remixes of popular music tracks, the game's industry has caught on to the idea. First to give one of their games the remix treatment is Team 17. They've taken one of their best-selling titles, *Alien Breed*, added 6 new levels, included a password continuation system, created brand-new end-of-level creatures, and lots of surprise new features. Not only that, but the Wakefield-based softco has also reduced the price to a bargain £10.99. Other software companies please take note!

WELL HARD RAM



Cumana are offering a way to kill two birds with one stone, and get a clock into the bargain! Their COM 201 '3-in-1' interface combines a half-meg RAM upgrade with a hard disk interface, plus a battery-backed clock. Featuring a static RAM data buffer and direct memory access, the board plugs into the trapdoor port of the A500.

Although the unit retails at £49.95, Cumana are selling it for £22.45 to the first 500 customers. Cumana can be contacted on 0483 503121.

WISH UPON A STAR



Star Micronics has just announced the release of what it claims is the cheapest ever colour printer, priced at £219.00. The LC 100 Colour 9-pin Printer includes automatic selection of industry standard emulations, a push tractor and paper parking, eight resident Near Letter Quality fonts, electronic dip switches and a LED control panel. The print speed is quoted at 180 cps in draft, with 45 cps in NLQ mode.

This is followed up by the release of a new mono 24-pin model, the LC24-100. Aimed at the entry-level user, and priced at £239.00. It offers a 16K buffer, 10 Letter Quality fonts, electronic dip switches, paper parking, a push tractor, a multiple copy facility, and has a quoted print speed of 192 cps in Draft Elite, with 64 cps in Letter Quality mode. Star can be contacted on 0494 471111.

HIDEOUS



MACABRE

GRUESOME

COVERDISKS

BEFORE YOU BEGIN To cram all this software on this month's disk we had to archive the Videoscape disks – but don't worry. Using the latest software available we have compressed the disks and attached easily executable script files.
To unarchive your *Videoscape* disks, simply have two blank disks standing by. switch on your Amiga and insert the coverdisk at the prompt. When Workbench has loaded simply double click on the Vdisk icons and you will be requested to insert a blank disk.
Having done this just press return and the archive will be expanded to produce a working bootable disk.
When you have done this for both disks, turn off your machine and restart it with the first disk in the drive. *Videoscape* will then boot up and you can follow the intructions below.

ON YOUR DISKS

How much can we cram onto one disk? More than a little that's for certain. This month we have crammed an enormous 2.5Mb on both disks. Apart from the fabulous playable demos of *Legends of Valour* and *Sword of Honour* on Disk 45, we have given you lucky devils a fantastic 3D animation package, *Videoscape*, and a simply scrumptious personal organiser. Load it up.

VIDEOSCAPE 3D

LOADING DISK 44

There is nothing amazingly difficult about this month's disk. To activate it simply turn your Amiga on and insert the disk at the prompt. Then follow the directions below to access the fabulous programs

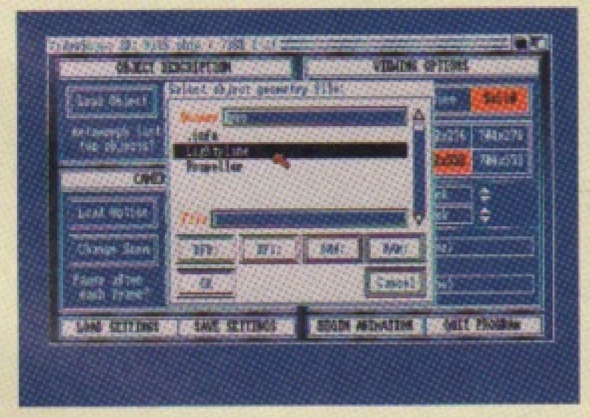
Videoscape 3D is a legend in its own lunchtime. When wireframe 3D graphics were still wooing the computer world, *Videoscape* was pioneering the amazing concept of solid 3D. Okay, so solid 3D graphics are the norm these days, but *Videoscape* is no less impressive and powerful than when it was first released. Proof of its power and flexibility are the numerous PD animation demos created with it. We've got hold of the version 2.01 update for you lucky lot.

Once you've mastered the program, some truly stunning 3D animations can be created – the only limits are your machine's memory and your imagination. There are some instructions on disk one, but to get you started, here's a brief guide to the program.

GETTING STARTED

Once you've got the main Videoscape 3D program up and running, the first thing you'll want to do is load in a demo animation. These aren't stored as a series of graphic frames; instead there are separate directories containing data for the objects, backgrounds, 'flightpaths', and camera positions and movements. To get a feel for what the program can do, follow these instructions for loading up an animation.

1. From the main *Videoscape 3D* screen, click on the 'LOAD OBJECT' box, located in the top left corner of the screen.



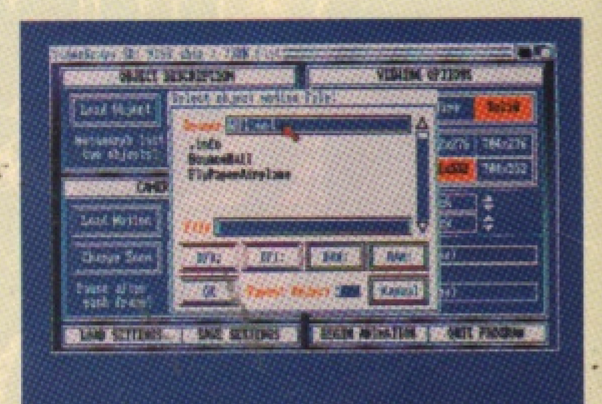
After selecting 'LOAD OBJECT', click on 'Lightplane' in the file requester.

2. A requester box will appear, giving a directory listing of the disk in the internal drive. Click in the filename 'Lightplane', followed by a click on the 'OK' box.

3. The text in the top box (marked 'drawer'), will now change to 'mot'. Click in this box and delete the contents.

4. Now place disk two in your first external drive if you have one, and replace the text you just deleted with 'DF1:mot', then press RETURN. If you have just the single internal disk drive, remove disk one, and replace it with disk two. Type into the top box 'DF0:mot', then press RETURN.

5. The lower box will now change to show the files 'BounceBall' and 'FlyPaperAirplane'. Click on 'FlyPaperAirplane', then click on the 'OK' box.



Change the directory to 'DF1:mot' or 'DF0:mot' depending on which drive your second disk is in

6. You should now be back on the main screen. Hold down the right mouse button and highlight 'Overscan'. Keeping the button depressed, move across to the off-shoot menu, and select the top

Click on 'LOAD MOTION' then change the directory as before.

option 'Off'.

7. Move down to the bottom left quarter of the screen marked 'CAMERA MOTION'. Click on 'LOAD MOTION', and the file requester will reappear.

8. If you have disk two in the internal drive, click in the top box marked 'DRAWER', and change the text from 'cam' to 'DF0:cam', then press RETURN. If disk two is in an external drive, replace the 'cam' with 'DF1:cam' in the top box, then press RETURN.

9. Click on 'FlyThroughTube', then click on the 'OK' box.

10. On the right of the screen are two sets of small arrows, next to which are the words SKY COLOUR and GROUND COLOUR. Click on the top UP arrow of the top pair until 'Lt blue' appears next to it. Then click on the UP arrow from the lower pair, until the text beside that reads 'Dk blue'.

11. Now you're ready to see some action. Click on the box marked 'BEGIN ANIMATION' at the bottom of the screen, and marvel as the aircraft banks and rolls into the foreground.

12. Press ZERO on the numeric keypad (not on the main keyboard) to exit back to the main screen.

When you've seen enough of that, try loading







Sit back and watch your light-sourced plane swoop into the foregound.

some different objects, backgrounds and movement paths, as you did with the first lot. Most of the animation data directories are on disk two, but the Videoscape program doesn't know where to find them, so you'll have to change the directories yourself for certain functions. This involves nothing more complex than clicking on the relevant device boxes at the bottom of the file requester. They're the ones labelled DF0:, DF1: and DH0:.

DESIGN IT YOURSELF

As part of the *Videoscape 3D* package, you also get a program called ROT. This is where you can design your own 3D objects for use in the main *Videoscape* program. If you have enough available memory, you can run this alongside the main program. Just move the *Videoscape* program display to the back, and click on the icon labeled D3D in the disk one folder. If you have a smaller machine, you may have to close down *Videoscape* before loading ROT.

Rather than jump straight in and try designing an object from scratch, the best thing to do is load up an example object, then mess around with that until you've got the hang of it. Give this a go:

1. From the menu, select 'Load a ROT object'.

2. A file requester will appear. Click on 'ROTobjects', and then click on the filename 'RobotHead', which has just appeared in the directory window.

3. Click on the box marked 'DO IT!'.

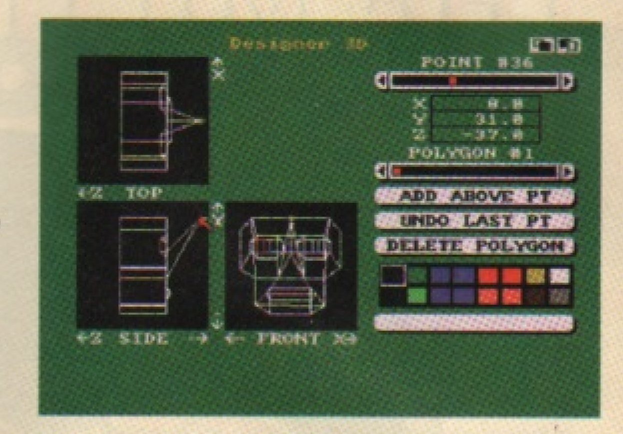
Now you are back in the ROT main screen, and should be able to see three projections of a robot head, drawn in transparent vectors. To see what he really looks like, holding down the right mouse button, move up to the menu marked 'ACTION', and select the 'Switch to action editor' option. Click on the 'PREVIEW' box, and the robot head (now in solid 3D) will begin spinning. After a few seconds of flickery animation, it will have stored all the frames, which it can then cycle through for a much smoother animation. Click on 'STOP' when you've seen enough. Now we can go and modify it in the editor. Select 'Switch to object editor' from the OBJECT menu.

Let's give him a nose job...

1. De-select 'Show all polygons' from the OBJECT menu.

2. Drag the POINT slider with the left mouse button so that the point number reads 3.

The front and side elevations of the robot head should now each have a little yellow dot on the tip of the nose. Move into the side elevation box (the



Extend the robot's nose with a quick mouse drag...

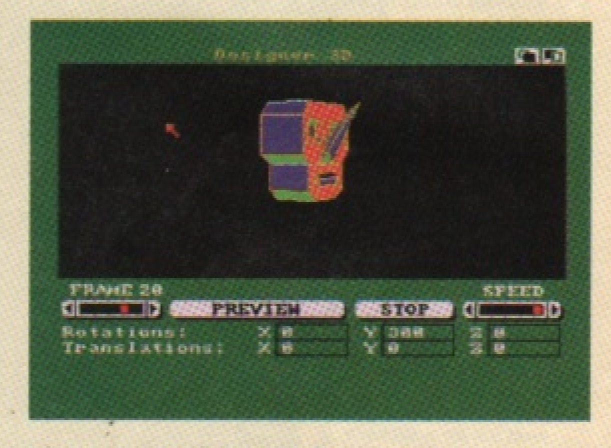
one at the bottom left), and move the yellow dot to the top right corner of the box.

4. Now select 'Switch to action editor' from the ACTION menu.

5. Click on preview, and watch the robot head spin around with his brand new nose.

After a while, you can have a go at making your own objects, and using them in full light-sourced 3D animations with *Videoscape*. For more detailed instructions, select the 'HELP' option from ROT's project menu. We'll have a full tutorial next month.

...and here he is with his proud new bugle.



ORGANISED

This is a self-explanatory filo-data program which will help get some organisation into your life (much needed around these offices).

To run simply double-click on the icon and you wil be presented with a familiarlarly styled calendar page.By clicking on the seperators towards the edge of the display you can enter the different modes, which are (from the top): calendar mode, day-by-day, Address book, notes and preferences.

To enter information into any of the fields simply click with the mouse in the string gadgets on screen and type away. When you enter data in the day-by-day section the entries for those dates will be highlighted in the main calendar.

In some of the sections the two gadgets above the hinge will become active. The '?' gadget will enable the search routines (very handy if you are looking for a particular event or note) and the 'P' gadget will allow data to be printed out.

The preferences screen allows you to change the default colours used and select the time-out for the screen saver, as well as operate a rather handy calculator. To close the program simply click on the strange grey blob to the left and just outside of the main screen. You will then be given various data save options before the program quits.

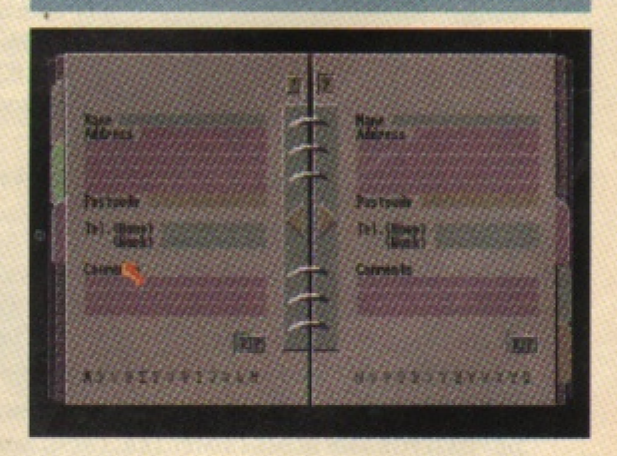
Most of the options are self explanatory, so open up the program and have a serious muck about. Enjoy!

Important! In order to use this software properly you must create a further subdirectory on your boot-up disk (Workbench or whatever) called 'filodata'. It makes sense to install this on your normal boot-disk or copy of workbench.

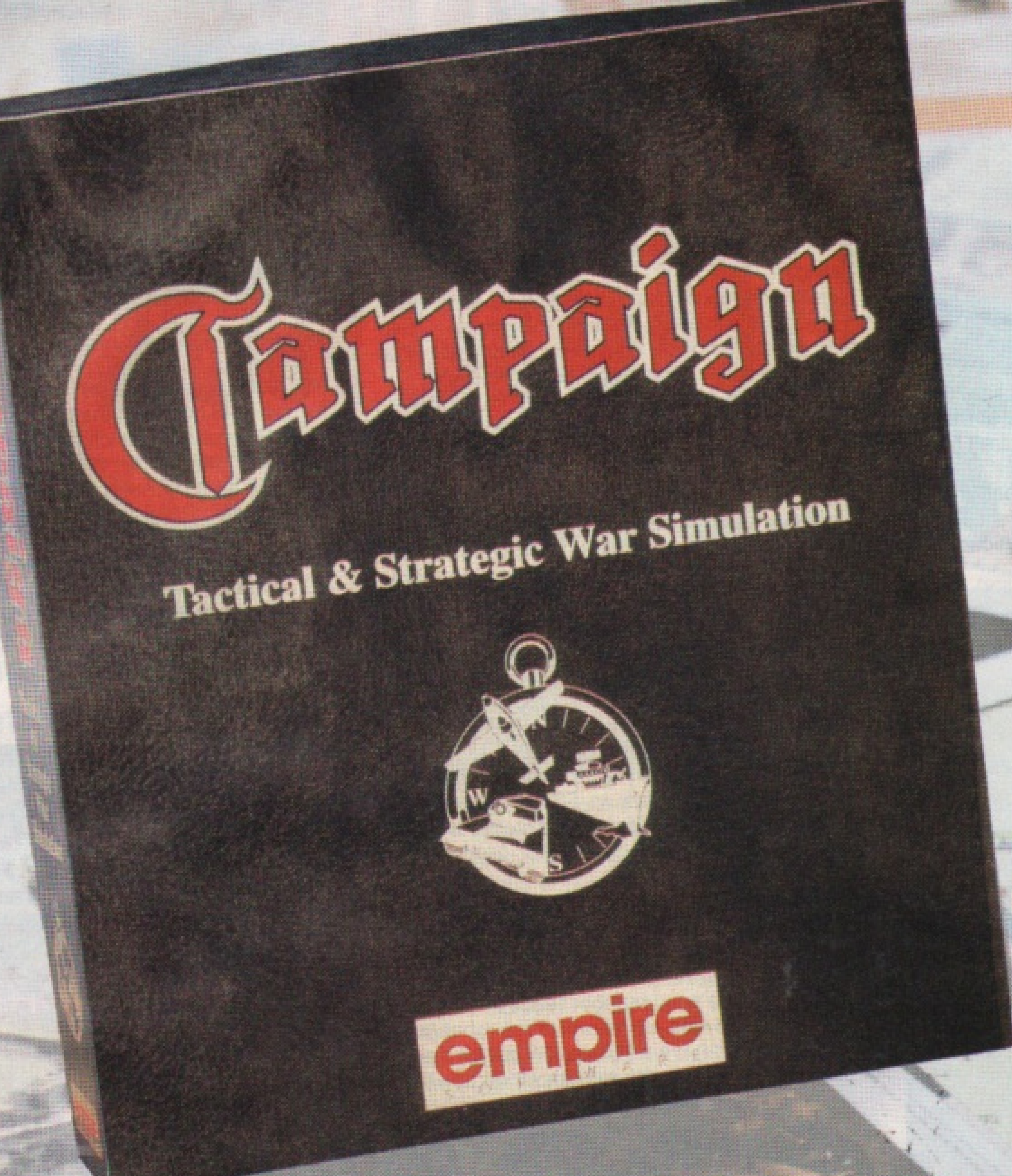
Do this by booting from Workbench and entering the shell. Then type:

makedir df0:filodata

You may now save preferences and data by running the program from this disk (or from another disk providing that you boot from this disk first).



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45

COVERDISKS

GAMES DISK

LOADING DISK 45

Insert Coverdisk 45 in your drive. Wait for the screen to display the icons for *Legends of Valour* and *Sword of Honour* then click on the one you wish to play. The game will load automatically and you may begin. If you have trouble loading the disk, contact PC Wise at the address given below.

IF YOUR DISK WON'T LOAD...

In the unlikely event of your CU Amiga coverdisks not loading, remove all cartridges and peripherals and try again. If they still won't load, pop it in an envelope and send it to: CU DISK RETURNS, PC WISE, DOWLAIS TOP BUSINESS PARK, DOWLAIS, MERTHYR TYDFIL, MID-GLAMORGAN, CF48 2YY. They will then test your disk and send a replacement as soon as possible. For any urgent problems, though, please ring the PC Wise helpline on 0685 350505, this line can be reached between the hours of 10.30 and 12.30 weekdays. Whilst CU AMIGA makes every effort to check our coverdisks for all known viruses, we can accept no responsibility for possible damage caused by viruses which may have escaped our attention.

LEGENDS OF VALOUR

TRAPPED IN THE CITY

U.S. Gold's new role playing game, *Legends of Valour*, is set in the city of Mitteldorf, on the island of Wolfbrood. The player takes the role of a young adventurer visiting the city in search of fame and fortune. He's not having much luck though, as the moment he arrives the city is put under quarantine, due to a plague.

Your first glimpse of the mysterious city of Mitteldorf, where you may eat, drink, gamble and trade, will be strange indeed. There are taverns to offer you hospitality, shops where you may buy and sell, and opportunities to chance your arm with a little gambling. Have a look around this enormous city, we're sure that it will amaze you.

Legends is controlled purely by the mouse. To turn your character around you may click the right mouse button (RMB), alter the direction you face by moving the mouse. Walk straight ahead by pressing the left mouse button (LMB). Movement icons are also available on screen. To switch off mouse-controlled movement, click the RMB a second time. To enter buildings walk straight into the doors. For trading, gambling and similar activities, click at the appropriate point on the viewing window.

All of the icons indicated below are operated by placing the cursor on them and clicking the LMB. Those detailed in italics control functions in the full game which are not included on the demo – be careful if curiosity compels you to click on these, as some, like *System*, will exit the program.

1. Viewing Window. Click once on the Celtic cross to enlarge the scene being viewed; click once more to reduce it again.

2. *Unique Magic Items. When found they will conveniently appear in these boxes to let you know...but not in the demo.*

3. Examine. Eye, eye. Click here to learn about any item displayed in the box below...normally. In the demo this will simply catapult you into a pub (not too bad an alternative).

4. Nearest Object. This displays, you've guessed it, the object on the floor which is nearest to you. If you want to pick up one of the useful items lying around Mitteldorf (bottles, bags, swords, and other cool gear) just point to it with the cursor and it will appear here. Then click on this box and, presto chango, it will disappear from the panel and leap into your right hand (11), or your backpack (13) if you're already holding something.

5. *System. Load and save games, turn the music and sound effects on and off (a deathly hush falls over Mitteldorf during the Demo – during the full game the inhabitants make themselves heard), and more semi-technical kinds of stuff.*

6. *Status Indicators. These show how you're doing...usually. The symbols represent (from left to right) health, energy, injuries, appeal, hunger, thirst and sleep. The higher the horizontal lines rise on the vertical bars, the better you're feeling.*

7. Movement Icons. As their name suggests, these control the way you stride heroically through Mitteldorf on your leg-ends of valour. They mean (from top left to bottm right): Rotate Left, Walk Forward, Rotate Right, Move Left, Run, Move Right, Turn 180°, Move Backwards, *Increase Guild Rank*

8. Action Display. A variable selection here – some you can use some you cannot. *Slash (with a sword, that is)*, *Thrust*, *Slice*, Map (click to see the town plan), *Magic Spells*, *Religious Spells*, *Sleep*, Use Item (in the demo this acts as a shortcut to a trading post), Hail Person (in the demo this will send you to a tavern).

9. Compass. This points in the direction you're facing. You can use it to change direction by clicking on the outer edge and the N, E, W, S boxes.

10. Drop. Let go of the item in your right hand and let it plummet to the floor below.

11. Right Hand. We just mentioned this. Any item currently being held in your right hand will be shown here. To switch it for an object in your backpack (13) click on the desired item. Click here, then on an empty box in the backpack if you don't want to have anything in your hand.

12. *Throw.*

13. Backpack. Each item you pick up, and which is in neither your hand nor your pockets, will be displayed here.

14. Pockets. These six boxes contain pictures of the goods normally traded in Mitteldorf. Click on each, and hold the button down, to see the quantity you have on you, or for which you possess letters of credit or bills of lading. The amount will appear in the cash display (15). The goodies are: Gems (ounces); Spices (lbs); Pigments (pints); Grain (cwts); Hide (no. of pelts); and Ale (gallons)

15. Cash Held. Self-explanatory, really. The number indicates Groats, the unit of currency in Mitteldorf.

16. Message Window. Text sometimes appears here.

SWORD OF HONOUR

Sword of Honour, from Global Software, gives you the chance to play the ninja – Nippon's stealthiest, and deadliest, martial artist. In these two screens you must see if your unarmed warrior can defeat a sword-wielding opponent, then, never mind the Water Margin, a fiery fiend must be avoided so your ninja may acquire a fitting weapon. That's all for this demo I'm afraid, don't try to leave the two screens immediately visible or you may be in for a nasty surprise..

Our *Sword of Honour* demo may be controlled by either a mouse or a joystick. The moves with a mouse use both of its buttons. LMB clicks produce moves refered to in normal text, and RMB clicks produce the effects in italics. With a joystick you move and evade without the firebutton pressed, and pressing it produces an attack.

H. If you pick up the sword it will appear in one of these boxes. Moving your cursor onto the object will display the words 'Use', 'Give' and 'Drop'. Click on one of these if you want to implement the command (although whether any action results depends upon your circumstances when you click).

A. Crouch and punch (if you are facing right). Punch head (if facing left). *Sweep kick* (if facing right). *Kick head* (if facing left).

B. Turn/walk left. *Jump backwards* (if facing right). *Kick midriff* (if facing left).

C. Jump upwards. N.B. If this button is pressed while the ninja is standing in front of either of the pathways leading toward the back of the screen, he will turn his back on you and exit the game. *Flying kick forwards, or slash with sword if you get hold of one and want to try it out.*

D. Crouch (and pick up object, if one is to hand).
Roll forwards.

E, Turn/walk right. *Kick midriff* (if facing right). *Jump backwards* (if facing left).

F. Punch head (if facing right). Crouch and punch (if facing left). *Kick head* (if facing right). *Sweep kick* (if facing left).

G. Life meter. Five blue figures represent your lives. The horizontal bar above indicates the state of health of your ninja: the blue will ebb away as he sustains injuries. The health of your current enemy is indicated in the upright block at the bottom right. The blue here will diminish in pace with the slapping dished out by your ninja.
If you click on this box with the Yin-Yang cursor, messages may appear. Click again to restore the life meter.

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A4000

TOP RATED

After months of speculation, announcements, retractions, the building of hopes and the dashing of hopes, Commodore has finally unveiled the A4000. Revealed fleetingly at the World of Commodore Show in Pasadena, the first machines have started trundling out of the Big C's new plant in Irving, Scotland. For the world's first review of the latest in the Amiga family, read on...

Launching a new machine is a tricky business, and one which Commodore have now done three times in one year. It's tricky because there are all sorts of things to consider: the market it's aimed at, the price, the promotional budget, the restructuring of the rest of the range and the support to developers.

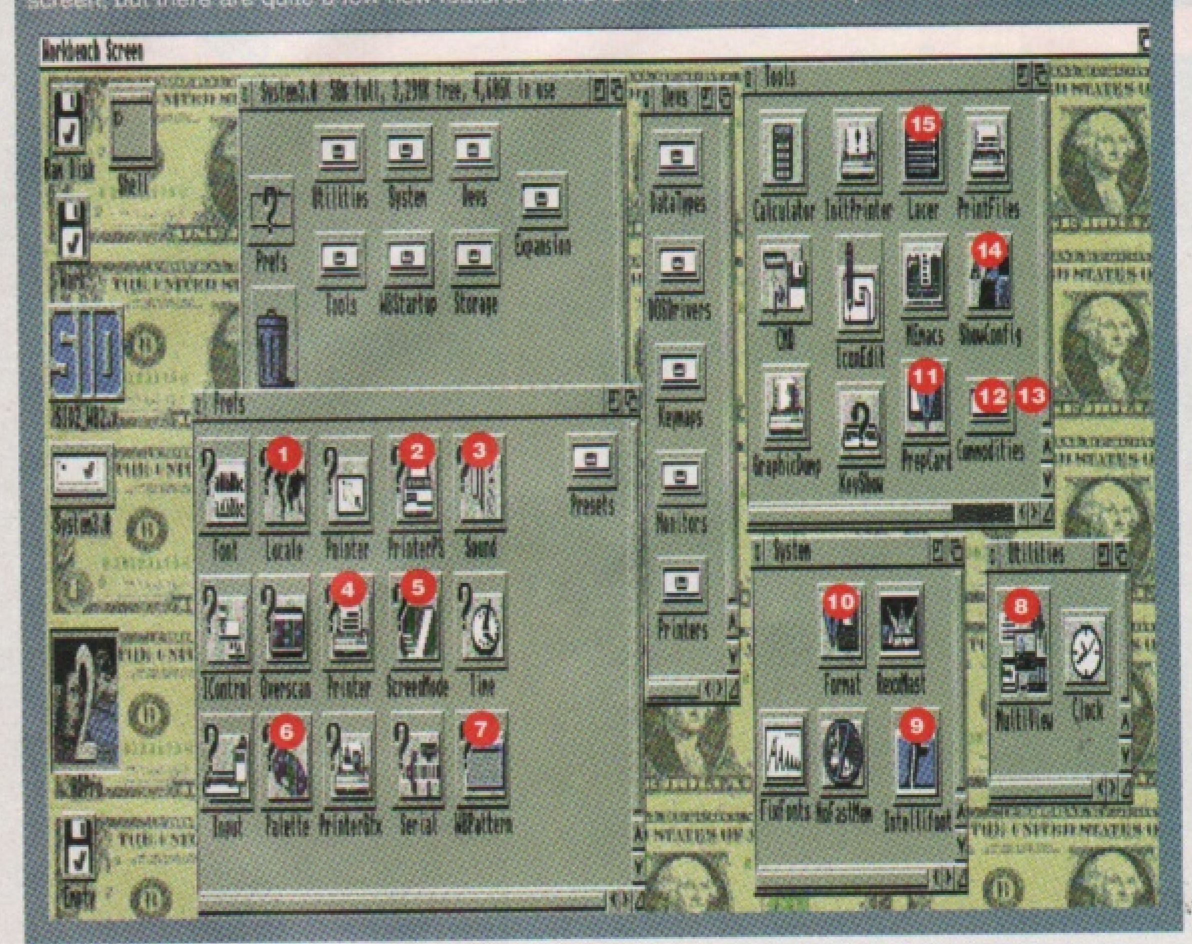
Whatever the thoughts passing through the synapses in Maidenhead, they are now committed. The new wave of Amigas starts here. In fact the A4000 is probably more revolutionary than any machine since the original A1000 back in '85. Not only does it contain a new processor, but it also sports a new Kickstart, a new version of Workbench and a completely revolutionised chipset.

Let us now take you on a tour of the machine everyone has been waiting for.

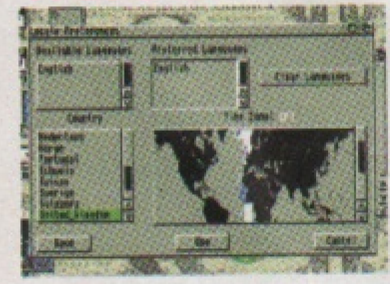
This is the future of amiga

WORKBENCH

The A4000 ships with Workbench 3.0, a six disk extravaganza of an operating system that is never likely to fully work on a floppy-based system (unless it has High Density floppies). The changes to the Workbench have not been major, but they are certainly noticeable when you start to use the system. On the whole there are no cosmetic differences apart from the ability to have a 256-colour Workbench screen, but there are quite a few new features in the form of extra tools and preferences.



1. LOCALE



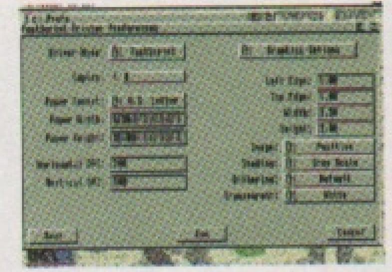
It may not be exceptionally useful, in fact you may only ever use it once, but it is a nice feature bringing the Amiga more into line with business systems like the Mac and PC.

The Locale tool 'localises' your Amiga setup to a particular area of the world. The map allows you to set your time zone (which isn't actually used by Workbench itself, but is stored along with other system information in case a future application should need it) and the language you would like to use. This in turn sets up the standard for numerical conventions, and time and date format as used by the language you have selected.

More than that, from then on all Workbench menus and requesters (including any Workbench tools) will appear in that language. These choices are saved and may be picked up by other applications in the future.

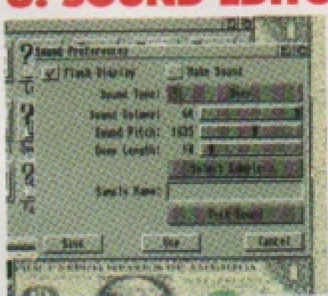
The new international mode format for disks attempts to preserve all the special characters used by any particular language.

2. PRINTER PS



A stunning addition to Workbench is support for PostScript printers. At last you can output direct to a PostScript printer without having to go through a DTP package like *Professional Page* or *PageStream*. You may think that the only reason to print via PostScript is if you are doing some sort of DTP work, but it can be just as handy to be able to print out text for letters or a book manuscript this way.

3. SOUND EDITOR

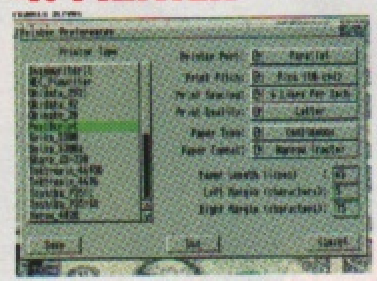


Don't get too excited – this isn't a replacement for *Med* or *Audiomaster*. You can't actually edit sounds with this tool, it is simply a selector for the system sound preferences. Whenever a system message appears, or a program sends the Control-G ASCII code (which is listed as 'bell') the screen will flash and a tone will sound. This has happened on Workbench since the dawn of the Amiga.

What this tool does is allow the user to select the tone and volume of the bell, whether the screen will flash or to use a sample instead of the simple 'bong' noise.

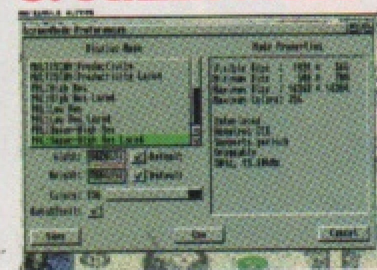
If 'sample' is selected from the cycle gadget, a requester will pop up asking where the sample is located. Select the filename and the sample will be played whenever a system warning occurs.

4. PRINTER



The printer preferences haven't changed that much, apart from the addition of a PostScript driver. The driver will work in exactly the same way as any other driver, so you will be able to output PostScript from any application which supports the preferences printer.

5. SCREEN MODE

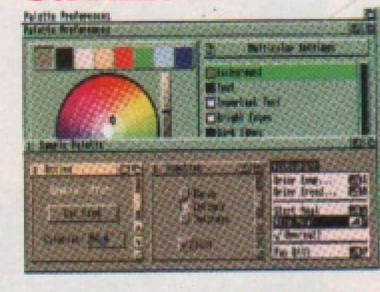


The monitor selection routine is much the same as Workbench 2, except of course that due to the new chipset a new range of resolutions and colour options are available. There are eight colour resolutions available in all modes (which makes productivity mode rather redundant).

There is not really much point having a 256 colour Workbench as the number of colours actually used by Workbench only stretches to eight. IconEdit won't support 256 colours either, which is a sensible move otherwise .info files would start taking up large amounts of disk space, not to mention being totally illegible on lower versions.

There is support for the flickerfixed High and Low res modes with a new interlace option as well. Basically, this means that the screens can be 256, 512 or 1024 pixels high, with the last of these needing some extra flicker-fixing hardware. You will need a flicker-fixer to use the Super-High Res mode in interlace too.

6. PALETTE



The Palette requester has changed somewhat in that you now get one of those cut colour cycle requester things to select your colours from. Depending on what screen mode you are operating in, and how many colours are available to you, the Palette

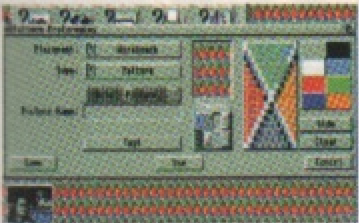
a computing

tool may open its own custom screen.

The colour wheel appears dithered usually, but the full colour range is displayed in the slider bar. As mentioned before you can only select up to eight different colours for workbench operations, since there are only eight that the system can use.

If you have difficulty imagining what your colour set would look like there is a preview window available, detailing every circumstance possible so you can check for legibility and so on. Particular colours may be recalled from a range of presets, and you can save different palette files for easy recall at a later date.

7. WB PATTERN

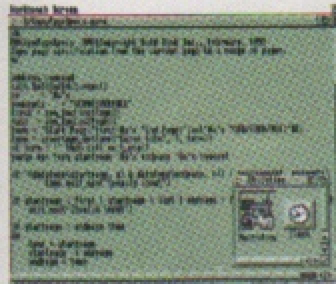


A lot of nonsense is talked about the Workbench pattern. Many people think it is a frivolous, unnecessary addition to the system. And the rest of them don't like it at all. Of course, complicated patterns in lots of colours are ridiculous, but if you are going to spend most of your day looking at it, then you may as well be able to change it to whatever you like.

As with WB2 the editing options are quite primitive, it being a case of a steady hand and a lot of patience if you want to create something more adventurous. As is traditional, all the default patterns are hideous and unlivable with. There must be a whole department at West Chester devoted to thinking up the most evil and repellent patterns.

The important point is that now you can use an IFF picture (up to 256 colours) as your backdrop image. It doesn't matter what mode the image was created in, it will be mapped pixel for pixel. If the image doesn't quite fill the screen then it will be tiled.

8. MULTIVIEW



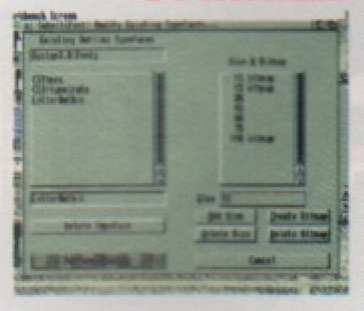
This tool is CBM's attempt at a universal file reader . Activating Multiview causes a file requester to pop up.

It doesn't matter what sort of file it is, it should be accessible by Multiview. This is achieved by dropping data files in the Data Types drawer of the system disk. These files detail the structure of the information and allow multiview to display it in a meaningful way.

The datatypes supplied are ILBM, 8SVX, AmigaHelp and FTXT, which cover graphics, sound, help files and IFF text respectively. Note that when it comes to graphics, multiview will display the file to the best of its ability. Since the output is constrained to the Workbench screen, even if your ILBM is 256 colours it will only display the amount of colours available to it on the Workbench window. This is an advantage rather than a drawback, as Multiview is intended to be a quick utility to work out what files are, not an application in its own right.

Multiview will support the clipboard though, so pieces of text, pictures and sound can be cut and pasted and then drawn into other clipboard-type applications.

9. INTELLIFONT



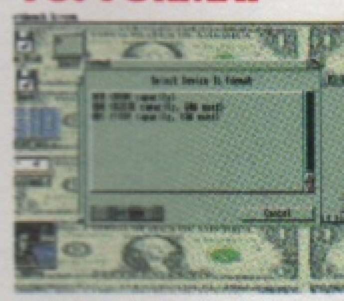
The Intellifont tool is provided to make proper use of the scaleable fonts available under Workbench. Compugraphic Fonts first appeared with release 2.0 of Workbench, but the software to harness them was ropey to say the least. Fountain is gone now, and instead we have Intellifont.

There are two main uses for Intellifont; installing new fonts and modifying the ones that you've already got. There are three scaleable fonts supplied with this version of Workbench: CGTimes, CGTriumvirate (which is incredibly similar to Helvetica, but not that similar honestly Mr Copyright lawyer), and LetterGothic.

You can only install FAIS type CG fonts, such as found for the PC (just as well that *CrossDos* is included).

Modifying the fonts you have entails being able to specify different theoretical sizes for them (if they should ever come up in a requester) and creating actual bitmaps of the given sizes to be stored for use by applications..

10. FORMAT



Thanks to the High Density drive, the format command has been re-written. This means that when you select a disk icon and choose Initialise from the menu, the new tool springs into action.

If the disk in question is High Density, it will automatically default to formatting it to the maximum capacity. This is a good thing, because High density disks don't like being formatted to 880k – they may work for a while, but on the other hand you may loose all your data. This is such a well known fact that it is even mentioned in CBM's manual.

Normal DSDD disks will be virtually unaffected. The format command still supports the FFS mode for floppies (as from WB2.0, these disks cannot be read under lower systems of Workbench) and international mode (which attempts to preserve accented characters and , likewise, will not work on Workbench 1.3 or lower).

There is also a new mode called Directory caching, which attempts to create an easily accessible cache area on the disks so that directories and icon data can be read more quickly. This mode means that slightly less of the disk is available for data (but not much), and will only work on this version of Workbench.

The new-style Format command also displays a handy little fuel-gauge type box which graphically demonstrates how far the process has got.

There ought to be some sort of campaign set up for the renaming of this command really. The word 'Format' contains all the wrong connotations for a tool which is useful and accurate.

11. PREPCARD

This is a tool provided for the formatting of PCMCIA memory cards. It is a bit useless on the A4000 since it doesn't have a PCMCIA slot, but presumably could be quite useful on the A600.

The cards may be formatted as a disk type device or as a memory type device (to expand system memory). The utility will also return the current status of the card, indicating the amount of memory available, the speed at which it can be accessed (which is about 3-4 times slower than normal Fast RAM) and the state of the battery on the card.

12. CROSSDOS

CrossDos has been one of the most popular file conversion utilities on the Amiga for a long time now, so it's only fair that it was the one chosen to give Workbench 3.0 a smattering of PC compatibility.

When using *CrossDos* you will be able to read and write data to PC-type disks (both standard and High Density) and even format PC disks with your Amiga drives. Unlike the commercial version 5.0, no icon will appear on the Workbench if the disk is not recognised as PC compatible.

To select drives to be used for *CrossDos* you must access the Storage drawer in the system directory. You can then either double-click on the relevant icon, or drag it into the DosDrivers drawer in the Devs directory if it is to be used all the time.

13. BLANKER

The screen saver commodity is much the same as the one in Workbench 2, except that now you have the option to have weird shapes animated on the screen if you leave it alone for too long.

It's amazing what they can do with modern technology.

14. SHOWCONFIG

This is just a small utility that gives systems details. Like the PD utility *SysInfo*, it will let you know what processor is in operation, which chipset is being used, versions of the relevant libraries and ROMs and how much memory is available to the system.

If any expansion boards are installed these will be listed along with their current status and manufacturer details.

15. LACER

A utility called Lacer has been provided for Genlock users. All it does is toggle interlace mode on and off, but this is very useful for people involved in video production or those who use a genlock.

16. BOOT OPTIONS

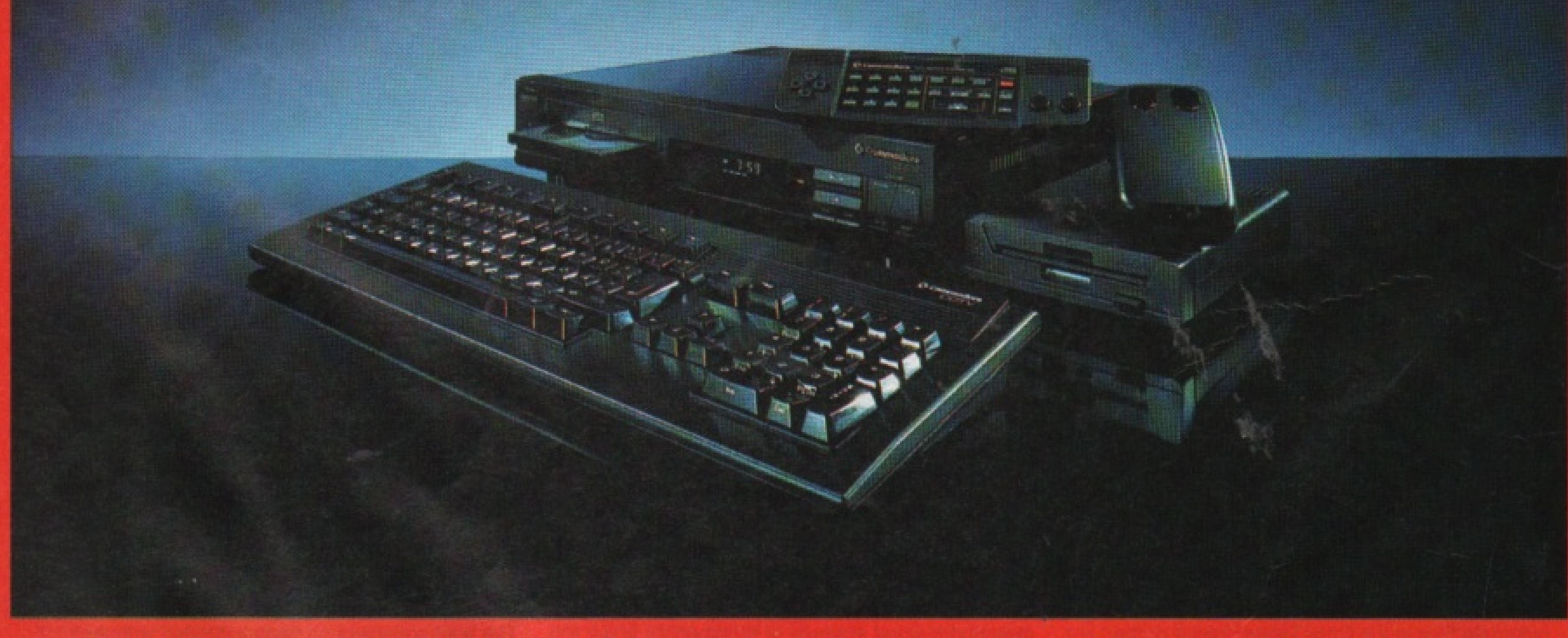
The boot options have been extended with the new Kickstart. As well as being able to select which device to boot from you can now control several other features as well.

For a start the internal caching of the CPU can be turned off, which can prevent many incompatibility problems.

There is also a diagnostic screen for determining if any expansions fitted to the Zorro slots are working. Information is displayed relating to the slot number, manufacturer and operating status of the card.

Another option screen allows you to select either PAL (default) or NTSC screen displays, as well as selecting a chipset type to use (original, ECS or 'best available').

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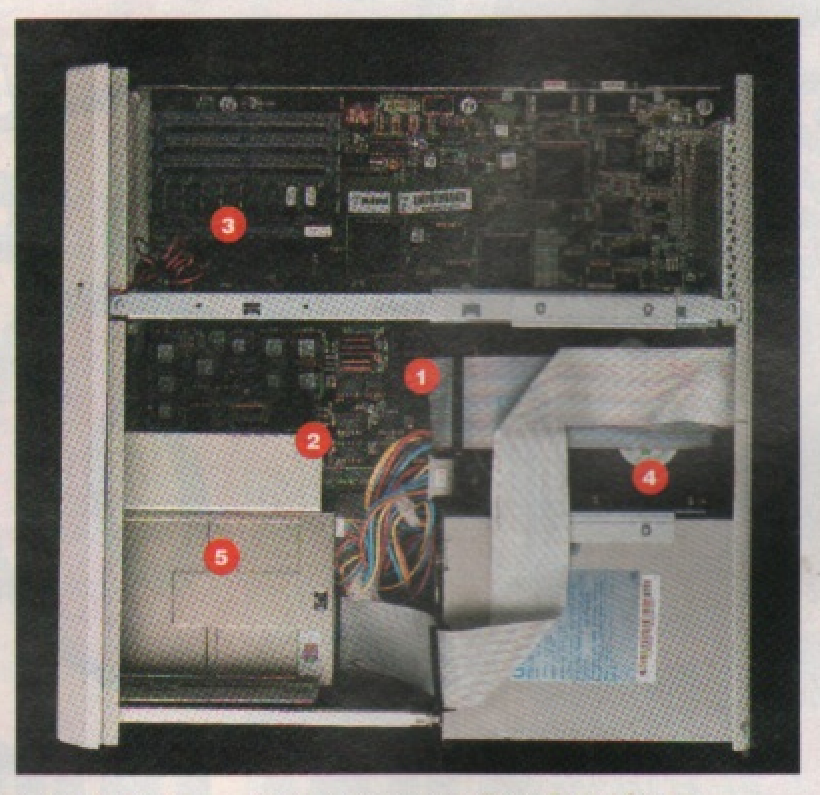
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What's new: HARDWARE

You already know that the 4000 is the first of a whole new generation of Amigas, but what are the new features that make it the machine of the future?



The most noticeable change in the new Amiga is the case. Commodore have gone for a slimline PC-like case with a much lower profile than the 2000. Whilst similar in some respects to the A3000 there is not as much arty grillwork and it even sports a lock on the front, just like a 'proper' computer. The front panels for the drive bays are slightly more obvious, one for a 3.5" drive and one for a 5.25". There is a rear bay too, for the addition of further IDE drives. However, the real changes are inside...

1. 68040

The Motorola 68040 chip, clocked at 25 MHz, is the heart of the new Amiga. This is the most advanced processor available in the range, and is used in top of the range machines like the Macintosh Quadra.

The 68040 is rated faster than the Intel 486 chip, to be found on all the top-end IBM PC clones these days. The chip itself includes an MMU (Memory Management Unit), and an FPU (Floating Point Unit) making the days of having to fork out extra for a maths co-pro disappear. Having said that, some of the A4000s will be fitted with the 68EC040, an economy version, which just means that the MMU and FPU are not installed. Without them the processor is still faster than a 68030 with a 68882 FPU but not as fast as it could be. Also, although AmigaDos won't use the MMU, some operating systems actually require one to be present (if you are thinking of running UNIX for example).

The processor is actually installed on a separate card in the CPU slot (situated towards the front, near the drive bays). The thinking behind locating it on a 'local bus' is that it will be simpler to change processors should the need arise, or even add expansion systems that must be closely tied to the Amiga's memory (like a Digital Signal Processor for example). Although a third party card might actually replace the processor module in the slot, it's likely that most of them will require you to remove the 68040 from the original processor module and place it into the new one. It's a good job then that the '040 is in a socket.

2. AGA CHIPSET

The old PAD, the original custom chipset, isn't quite the same anymore. After surviving several generations of change through to their ECS (Enhanced Chip Set) version, they have now changed completely – or have they?

The most immediate change is in the screen modes. The A4000 with Workbench 3 is now capable of operating in all modes with a 256 colour pallet. This will probably be quite amazing when somebody writes some software to support it.

Unfortunately HAM mode and Extra HalfBrite are things of the past. There is now an eight bit-plane HAm mode, but your old HAM software will no longer create 4096 colour masterpieces.

DPaint4 will run on the A4000, even in HAM mode, but the pallet is no longer the odd fringed thing we have come to know.

Those screen modes in full...

Mode	Resolution
Low Res	320 x 256
Low Res Laced	320 x 1024
Low Res No Flicker	320 x 512
High Res	640 x 256
High Res Laced	640 x 1024
High res No Flicker	640 x 512
Super High Res	1024 x 512
Super High Res Laced	1024 x 1024

3. RAM EXPANSION

Chip RAM is the memory used directly by the Direct Memory Access chips. Because of constant polling by the different chips, it is slightly slower than Fast RAM, but this is a concession to having what basically amounts to several co-processors running at once.

Chip memory is important because it is the only memory which can be addressed by these custom chips. This means it is of a priority for graphics and sound applications which rely on the custom chips. The Workbench screen also requires Chip memory – quite a lot of it if you are working in a 256-colour Super-Hi-Res Interlace mode.

The limits of chip memory haven't been increased, but it is now organised on a 32-bit wide structure (as in the A3000) and is connected via a SIMM module. The Fast RAM is also organised on SIMM modules and can be expanded to a total of 16Mb using four banks of 1Mb SIMMs. This will produce an appreciative sigh from the wallets of the expansionists – the A3000 used ZIP packages which were both difficult to fit and often hard (and expensive) to find. Almost everything uses SIMM modules nowadays though, even laser-printers, so expect more memory for your money.

Fast RAM is also organised around SIMM modules, but with the ability to use the larger 4Mb SIMM packages giving a total of 16Mb possible on the motherboard. Further expansion is possible through the Zorro slots

4. IDE INTERFACE

The IDE standard is a bit of a surprise choice for the built-in hard disk protocol. IDE, the standard used on many PCs for hard drives, and the drive modules tend to be slightly cheaper than SCSI ones. The advantage of the SCSI (Small Computer Systems Interface) protocol is

FIRMWARE

Five manuals accompany the latest Amiga, detailing better than ever before exactly what is going on, where and why.

The A4000 manual explains concisely, but expertly, and with the aid of copious diagrams, exactly how to add processor modules, hard drives, floppy drives, expansion cards and memory to the Amiga. The internal layout of the A4000 isn't quite as intricate and cramped as the A3000, so the instructions are a lot easier to follow. The specification in the back is excellent for showing all your PC-owning friends, and the problem solving section, whilst not extensive, is certainly miles ahead of anything Apple have ever written.

The AmigaDos manual details all the commands and tools that are available from the CLI and Shell. In addition to being an essential reference book there are also a number of tutorials designed to get users new to the Amiga as familiar as possible with this new computing environment.

The Workbench manual itself covers all the preferences and tools that come with the new operating system. Every detail of operation is extensively covered and there is a handy glossary at the back to explain all the technical terms I...er, some people, may not understand.

A hard drive guide is included to explain how the IDE mechanism fits in to the grand scheme of things Amiga. There is also advice about setting up, maintaining and installing new drives.

The final manual is the one quite a few people have been waiting for. It describes the operation of the ARexx language and includes a comprehensive list of all the functions and commands available. Although it contains very few examples, it's a darn sight better than nothing, which is precisely what Workbench 2 owners got.



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A4000 At a Glance...

Hardware: 68040 processor • High Density Floppy drive • AGA chipset • 32-bit Chip RAM • Internal expansion to 16Mb fast RAM via SIMM modules • Built-in IDE mechanism • 4 Zorro expansion Slots • Software (Kickstart/WB 3.0): Postscript driver • Intellifonts management • CrossDos • Sound Editor • Extended Boot Options • Prepcard • WB backdrops •



that a lot of other devices use it – tape streamers, optical drives, scanners and so on.

Of course the IDE standard was already in use on the A600 so it was only to be expected that the A4000 would include it too, but it's a move unlikely to go down well with developers. A SCSI controller card can easily be added via the Zorro slots, but as there are only four of these on the A4000 it could cause some problems when using other boards as well.

5. FLOPPY DRIVE

One feature enabled by the new chipset is the ability to access High Density floppy disks. These are essentially the same as the usual DSDD disks we have all become so familiar with but with one important difference. When formatted they now have a maximum capacity of 1.76 Mb of data (depending on the format type used). This means that the Amiga has finally caught up with the rest of the universe as regards floppy disks – the PC and the Mac have been using them for years. Maybe the capacity of the drive wasn't quite so important in the past, but with the enhanced graphics capabilities of the new chipset, file sizes are going to get bigger, not smaller.

Through *CrossDos* (which now forms part of Workbench) the drive will also be able to access High Density PC floppies, making the transfer of large amounts of data even easier.

A. AUDIO CONNECTOR

Although the sound capabilities of the Amiga have not been enhanced, there is now a small internal connector inside the A4000 which, according to the manual: 'enables an audio expansion device mounted internally to mix its output into the standard Amiga audio output'. Essentially it's just a connector which is wired through to the RCA jacks at the rear of the machine, but the implication is that an internal sound expansion device is on the way.

Further evidence to suggest that a 16-bit sound upgrade may be on the way is the fact that the processor is installed on a module board. Any likely DSP expansion would go via this route.

B. CONNECTORS

Not a major point, but the keyboard connector is now a 6 pin Ps/2 type affair, the same as the CDTV. The keyboard itself is almost identical to the A3000s and is finished in a nice white colour to match the case. A long lead is supplied, which is just as well because the connection to the A4000 is at the back next to the video slot.

The mouse port is the same as before though, although it has moved to the left-hand side of the case, towards the back. This suits those of us who like to loop the mouse cable around the back of the machine or indeed, left handed people, but if you are going to use a third party mouse, make sure you get one with a long enough cable!

COMMENT

'What will make or break the A4000 is the software and peripherals available and the support it gets from dealers. Without quality products to really show off the new features and put the underlying hardware to practical use it will have a hard time competing with products from the likes of Apple.

So far, to our knowledge, only GVP have announced a product that actively supports the new features of the A4000 – in this case the new genlock, which takes advantage of the AGA chipset. Provided other developers follow GVP's lead the A4000 should succeed.

Support from dealers who already stock and understand high-end Amiga products such as those from GVP, Progressive, Supra, etc. are essential. These dealers are the ones who will be able to demonstrate the full benefits of the A4000 and match systems to the customers needs.' *ANDY LEANING, SDL*

COMPATIBILITY

As with every new machine, there are bound to be some compatibility problems. Moving up to a new processor and a new Workbench it would be easy to imagine how things could go horribly wrong.

It's surprising then that almost all of the applications software we tested worked: *Art Department*, *Professional Page*, *SID*, *Real3D*, *Professional Draw*, *ProWrite*, *Quarterback*...no problems. Well, except for *SID* which complained about being stretched across a 1024x512 screen. *Professional Page* even worked when forced into Workbench operation on an over-scanned Super High-Res Interlace screen.

Incredibly even a large number of games will work (not that the busy exec types that will buy the A4000 will have time to play games of course, that's why they've got an '040), including *LotusIII* and *Zool*.

This bodes well for compatibility with other products – the only ones who are likely to cause problems are those which open a window on the Workbench. Some problems are likely to be solved by a re-issue of the Kickstart ROM in the future.

CONCLUSION

So the new Amiga is faster, has new graphic modes, a faster custom chip set, a new version of Workbench and a new Kickstart. all in all it is a completely new machine, and yet compatibility wise it seems to work with almost all software that works on WB2.0. Workbench 3 is likely to be available as an upgrade for existing Amiga owners, as you don't need to have the AGA chipset to take advantage of it.

It is impossible to upgrade the custom chips fom ECS to AGA as they are not pin compatible.

It compares well against the PC. With a faster processor than the Intel 486 and screen modes very close to those of Super-VGA. As to the Atari Falcon, well, whatever those strange people across the way on ST Review may think, there's no threat to the Amiga coming from that quarter.

The motherboard of the A4000 is likely to form the basis of a whole new range of machines, with a mid-range option being available, probably with an '030 processor module.

The gauntlet is now thrown down to developers to produce a new generation of software and hardware that can harness the power of the latest Amiga and its successors.

The A4000 is available from Calculus Stores, Tel:0543 251275 and Silica Sytems, Tel: 081 3091111

COMMENT

'The A4000 has a number of ineresting design features: Th processor board, allowing easy upgrades, the support for SIMM modules as RAM expansion an dthe new graphics reolutions. The IDE interface may not please Amiga die-hards but it does offer an inexpensive hard drive and interface. A SCSI controller will be available from November.

The aggressive pricing of this new flagship model will in ensure a successful future for the Amiga.' *DAVE CHEETHAM, CALCULUS STORES*

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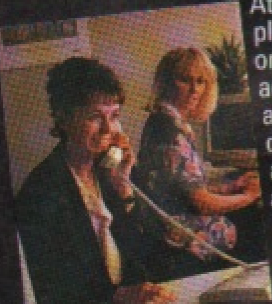
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VALUE FOR MONEY	92%
EFFECTIVENESS	96%
FLEXIBILITY	91%
INNOVATION	100%
OVERALL	**95%**



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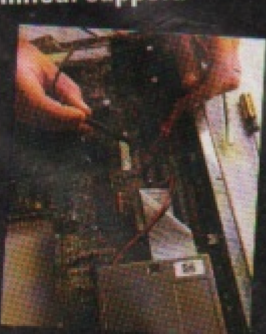
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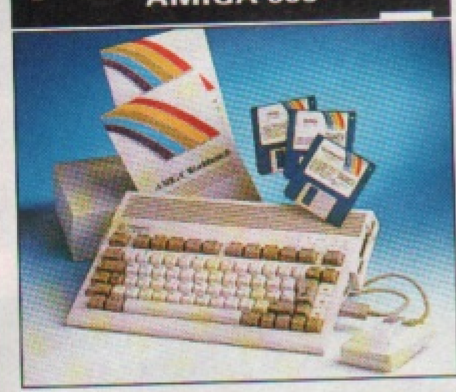
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'EPIC•LANGUAGE PACK'
1 Mb A 600 as standard and includes the excellent value Software titles: Deluxe Paint III • Trivial Pursuit • Epic • Myth • Rome

...ONLY £484.99!

A 600 2Mb (incl. above software)....£524.99

AMIGA 600



The stand-alone A 600 is compact, semi portable, fully featured and can be purchased in the following configurations:

A 600....£274.99
A 600 HD.... NOW ONLY £429.99
A 600 2Mb....£314.99
A 600 HD 2Mb....£469.99

A 600 RAM EXPANSION

FEATURES INCLUDE: - Trapdoor installation • Will not invalidate your warranty • Battery backed real time clock • Long life lithium cell • Enable/disable facility • Full installation instructions • Made in U.K. • Complete with famous Phoenix 2 year warranty.

Phoenix PA 601-populated-1Mb....£44.99
Phoenix PA 601-unpopulated-0Mb....£24.99
Phoenix A 600 ROM Sharer....£29.99
Keyboard switchable!

PHOENIX AMIGA Power Pack

When purchasing any Amiga you can also buy our unbelievable value PHOENIX POWER PACK, which includes over **£100** of quality software and accessories. Probably the best bundle around, just look at what you get!

SOFTWARE
Man Utd Europe • Kick Off 2 • Captive
Rick Dangerous • Pro Tennis Tour 2
ACCESSORIES
Fully Microswitched Joystick
50 Capacity 3.5" Disk Box
8mm Mouse mat • 10 Phoenix Branded Disks with Labels

Phoenix Power Pack....£39.99

AMIGA 1500

2.04 Workbench Includes: Deluxe Paint 3, Platinum Works, Home Accounts, Toki, Puzznic, x Elf, Amiga Format Book and Joystick
AMIGA 1500.... ONLY £539.99

AMIGA 1500 + 1084 SDI

This *SPECIAL OFFER* combines both the A1500 (as shown above) and the legendary Commodore 1084 SDI Monitor.
AMIGA 1500+1084 SDI....£729.99
Limited Stocks Only!

EMULATORS-A 500

GVP PC-286 16MHz....£239.99
Vortex A Tonce Plus 286 (16MHz)....£214.99
KCS Powerboard (with DOS 4.01)....£199.99
KCS Powerboard....£184.99
KCS adaptor for 1500/2000.... ONLY £59.99

MONITORS

PHILIPS 8833Mk II.... ONLY £194.99
Colour Stereo Monitor now including 'Lotus Turbo Challenge', and 1 years on-site warranty.
COMMODORE 1085 SDI....£216.99
COMMODORE 1084 SDI....£199.99

All monitors are supplied with a FREE cable for connection to your Amiga.

MONITOR ACCESSORIES-
14" Dust covers....£4.99
14" Tilt & Swivel stand....£13.99
Anti-Glare filter screen....£19.99
A4 Copy Holder....£12.99

HARD DRIVES A500

GVP IMPACT SERIES II Hard Drives, the fastest Hard Drive/Controller for the Amiga. Features Game Switch, external SCISI port, FAAASTROM SCISI Driver, GVP's custom VLSI chip and internal RAM expansion up to 8 meg! Units use high specification fast-access QUANTUM Hard Drives coming with 2 yr. guarantee.

A500-HD8+ 52 Mb (Unpopulated)....£329.99
A500-HD8+ 120 Mb (Unpopulated)....£424.99
A500-HD8+ 240 Mb (Unpopulated)....£689.99

ROCTEC

PRICE CRASH!!!!
Roctec "Rochard" hard drives now at unbelievably low prices!!

ROCTEC 40 MB....£259.99
ROCTEC 60 MB....£294.99
ROCTEC 80 MB....£329.99
ROCTEC 120 MB....£364.99
Featuring Quantum/Connor drives-very fast access times-(19ms or better) • expand up to 8 Mb using 1 Mb Simms only • 1 year guarantee • slimline design ideally colour matched to the A500.

ROCTEC (controlletr Only)....£164.99
Very similar in style and appearance to the GVP HD8+ but unpopulated and without a hard drive so you can fit your own. Please specify IDE orSCISI.

EXTRA MEMORY-Only £25.99 when bought with drive!

HARD DRIVES 1500/2000

Series II Hard Disk Controller/RAM card....£114.99
Series II 52 Mb Hard Disk and RAM card....£269.99
Series II 120 Mb Hard Disk and RAM card....£399.99
Series II 240 Mb Hard Disk and RAM card....£639.99
EXTRA MEMORY-Only £25.99 when bought with drive!

ACCELERATORS A500

GVP COMBINATION ACCELERATORS & HARD DRIVES-The ultimate expansion product for the Amiga 500!

A530 Combi 40MHz + 52Mb Hard Drive....£659.99
A530 Combi 40MHz + 120Mb Hard Drive....£757.99
A530 Combi 40MHz + 240Mb Hard Drive....£979.99
A530 68882 Co-Processor....£204.99

ACCELERATORS 1500/2000

GVP G-Force 030-25MHz + 1Mb....£545.99
GVP G-Force 030-40MHz + 4Mb....£784.99
GVP G-Force 030-50MHz + 4Mb....£1099.99

ACCELERATOR RAM Modules

1Mb Simm-32 Bit 60 Nanoseconds....£65.99
4Mb Simm-32 Bit 60 Nanoseconds....£182.99

PHOENIX A500 Plus 2 Meg RAM Upgrade Modules



A PHOENIX RAM module can expand your chip RAM up to 2 Mb by using the trapdoor expansion port. Extra RAM is necessary to unleash the incredible graphics capabilities of your Amiga. All our boards carry a full 2 year no quibble replacement guarantee. **It's never been cheaper to upgrade!**

1 Mb Fully populated RAM board.... NOW ONLY £34.99
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PRINTERS

STAR-
LC-100 Colour.... NEW! £159.99
9 PIN colour printer with paper parking, eight fonts and electronic DIP switches.
LC24-100.... NEW! £189.99
24 PIN with compressed data mode, 16 K buffer and 10 letter quality fonts,(with Star printer driver only).
LC-20....£134.99
LC-200 Colour....£195.99
LC24-20....£199.99
LC24-200 Mono....£219.99
LC24-200 Colour....£268.99
XB24-200 Colour....£379.99
SJ48 Bubblejet....£229.99
Star printers come with one year warranty.

CITIZEN-
Swift 240 Colour.... NEW! £279.99
Swift 240 Mono.... NEW! £259.99
Swift 200 Colour.... NEW! £219.99
Swift 9 Colour.... SPECIAL OFFER £179.99
224 mono....£214.99
224 Colour.... NOW ONLY £229.99
Swift 24e Colour.... NOW ONLY £269.99
Citizen printers come with 2 year warranty.

HEWLETT PACKARD-
Deskjet 500.... SPECIAL OFFER £339.99
Deskjet-500 Colour....£559.99
HP printers come with 3 year warranty.
HP black ink cartridge....£24.99
HP colour ink cartridge....£29.99

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STAR LC20....£57.99
STAR LC200....£59.99
STAR LC24-200....£62.99
STAR LC24-20....£62.99
STAR SJ48....£49.99

PHOENIX PRINTER PACK-
Supplied with **ALL** printers containing 1.8m std. printer cable, printer ribbons/cartridge and 250 sheets of paper absolutely **FREE**.

PRINTER ACCESSORIES-
We have a large range of **high quality** printer accessories for all the printers we sell including: **dust covers from £2.99 • Ink cartridges from £13.99 • Mono ribbons from £3.50 • Colour ribbons from £7.99 • Printer stands from £7.99**

CALL 0532-311932 FOR MORE DETAILS!

CHIPS

AMIGA CUSTOM CHIPS

Kickstart 2.04 ROM....£34.99
Kickstart 1.3 ROM....£27.99
Fatter Agnus 8372A....£34.99
NEW Super Denise....£34.99
CIA 8520A....£9.99

MEMORY CHIPS

4 Mb x 9 (-70) Simm....£99.99
1 Mb x 9 (-80) Simm....£27.99
256k x 9 (-80) Simm....£12.99
256k x 4 DRAM....£3.49
1 Mb x 4 (-80) Zip....*£34.99
256k x 4 (-80) Zip....*£29.99
1 Mb x 1 DRAM....£3.49
*This price is for 1 Mb of RAM

These chips cover practically every popular memory expansion or Hard Drive system on the market for the Amiga ie. GVP, SUPRA, MICROBOTICS, COMMODORE

RING OUR TECHNICAL HELPLINE IF YOU NEED ADVICE

MEMORY EXPANSION

SUPRA 500RX the ultimate in Fast Ram expansion units. *(*Uses 256x4 Zips)*
8 Mb pop to 1 Mb*....£99.99
8 Mb pop to 2 Mb*....£124.99
8 Mb pop to 2 Mb....£149.99
8 Mb pop to 4 Mb....£209.99
8 Mb pop to 8 Mb....£309.99

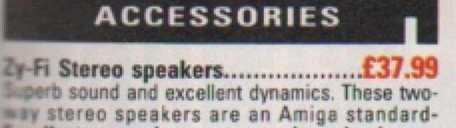
DISK DRIVES

All drives feature super slim design, enable-disable switch, thru port and come with a **1 year replacement guarantee!**
Phoenix Deluxe Drive....£47.99
Roctec Roclite.... NEW! £57.99
This famous drive has now been upgraded to include Anticlick and Virus Checker
Replacement A 500 Internal Drive....£39.99
Disk head cleaner....£3.99

VIDEO

The first col. digitiser for **under £100** from ROMBO.
VIDI-AMIGA 12.... ONLY £89.99
ROCGEN Plus....£129.99
ROCKEY BY ROCTEC-Chroma key unit
Embed live video in graphics!
Phoenix Price....£269.99

PHOENIX will be at the Future Entertainment Show Nov 5-8th Earls Court. Be sure to come and see us there and take advantage of some incredible show bargains!



ACCESSORIES

Zy-Fi Stereo speakers £37.99
Superb sound and excellent dynamics. These two-way stereo speakers are an Amiga standard- **Excellent companions on any gaming soiree!**

Control Centre £34.99
Heavy duty construction,rubber edging, perfect colour match, makes an ideal workstation for the A500/A600

DATA SWITCHES-*(25 pin D type)*
- 2 way £15.99
- 3 way £17.99
- 4 way £19.99

STORAGE:
- 90 Capacity BANX £11.99
- 150 Capacity POSSO £16.99
- Disk Box 10 Cap £1.99
- Disk Box 25 Cap £2.99
- Disk Box 50 Cap £4.99
- Disk Box 100 Cap £6.99
- Disk Box 120 Cap £7.99

"Thanks once again for your efficient service and patient advice."
S. Ward~ Norfolk

PHOENIX PRODUCTS

Mouse/Joystick Switch £13.99
Don't damage your Amiga's ports! This device saves wear and tear makes switchover *FAST*, and does **NOT** require power unlike many others.

Computer/Video Scart Switch £19.99
Flip between Video/computer signals at the push of a button.

AMIGA MUSIC

Attention all you music lovers! Phoenix have put together an unbeatable music deal for you this summer.

MUSIC-X Jnr....only £15.00
When purchasing either a Phoenix Stereo Sampler or Pro Midi 2 Interface
Please Note: this is a limited offer only while stocks last!

Stereo Sampler .... NOW ONLY £29.99
Combines ease of use with state of the art analogue to digital conversion technology.(inc. **FREE** sample editing software +audio lead)

Pro-Midi 2 Interface £24.99
This fully featured professional quality midi interface is very flexible giving semi-patch bay facilities. It has five ports in, out, thru and two switchable out/thru. (inc. **FREE** midi lead)

GVP Digital Sound Studio £54.99
High quality sound sampler for all Amiga Computers
Amiga Music Made Easy-Only from Phoenix!

SOFTWARE

WORD PROCESSING / DTP
- Kindwords 3 .... £36.99
- Interword £29.99
- Final Copy 2 .... NEW! £66.99
- Professional Page 3 .... NEW! £129.99
- Saxon Publisher .... NEW! £189.99
- Pagestream v2.2 .... £126.99
- Pagestream Font pack 1 .... £44.99
- Page Setter 2 .... £46.99
- Pen Pal 1.4 .... £57.99
- Prowrite v3.X £57.99
- Quickwrite £36.99
- Transwrite £29.99
- Wordworth £79.99
- Hot Links £52.99

INTEGRATED PACKAGES
- Gold Disc Office £59.99
- Mini Office .... NEW! £39.99

CAD & DRAWING
- Design Works £53.99
- Professional Draw 3 .... SPECIAL OFFER £79.99
- Intro CAD Plus £74.99
- X CAD 2000 .... £99.99
- X CAD 3000 .... £269.99

UTILITIES
- A-Talk 3 .... £44.99
- Cross Dos v5 *(inc, Cross PC Emulator)* £29.99
- Cross Dos £22.99
- Diskmaster 2 .... £43.99
- Dos 2 Dos £29.99
- Opus Directory £29.99
- Xcopy £36.99
- Quarter Back £45.99
- Quarter Baek Tools Vs 5 .... £49.99

DATABASE
- Superbase Pro 4 .... £164.99
- Superbase Pers 2 .... NOW ONLY £39.99

VIDEO PRODUCTION/TITLING
- SCALA 500 .... £79.99
- SCALA Professional £219.99
- Big Alternative Scroller £35.99
- Broadcast Titler 2 .... £179.99
- Font Pack 1 for Broadcast Titler 2 .... £88.99
- Font Enhancer for Broadcast Titler 2 .... £88.99
- Pro Video Post £168.99
- TV Show Pro £51.99
- TV Text Pro £84.99

FRACTAL AND SPECIAL FX
- Race Trace .... NEW! £93.99
- Deluxe Paint 4 .... £63.99
- Deluxe Video 3 .... £71.99
- Image Finder £44.99
- Pixmate £43.99
- Scenery Animator £62.99
- Vista £43.99
- Pro Vista £71.99

ANIMATION
- Take 2 .... £42.99
- Image Master £129.99
- 3-D Images £36.99
- Amos £36.99
- Amos Compiler £21.99
- Amos 3D £25.99
- Easy Amos £22.99
- Deluxe Paint 4 .... £63.99
- Director v2 .... £71.99
- Imagine v2 .... NOW ONLY £189.99
- Map master for Imagine £59.99
- Presentation Master £169.99
- Surface Master for Imagine £29.99
- Showmaker £142.99
- Video Director £107.99

PRESENTATION & SLIDE SHOW
- Can Do v1.6 .... NEW! £72.99
- Art Department Pro v.1 .... £143.99
- Art Department Pro Conv. Kit £57.99
- Can Do It V.I.G £94.99
- Hyper Book £44.99

ACCOUNTING
- Personal Finance .... NEW! £29.99
- Arena Accounts £83.99
- Home Accounts 2 .... £39.99
- System 3 .... £43.99
- Cashbook Combo £57.99

MICE & TRACKBALLS

NAKSHA Upgrade Mouse £24.99
(With Operation Stealth, mat & holder)
Roctec Mouse £13.99

GOLDEN IMAGE
Mega Mouse £12.99
(Has just recieved 90% Amiga Format Gold Award)
Optical Mouse £29.99
High precision, pointing device.
Crystal Trackball £37.99
Infrared-Cordless-Mouse ... NEW! £47.99
(Rechargeable top selling innovation.)
Optical Pen Mouse .... NEW! £39.99
High Quality 8mm mouse Mats £3.99

SCANNERS

Powerful image processing tools for the office or the home enviroment.

POWER-Features include: 100-400 dpi • 64-Greyscales Thruport to printer • **FREE** Editing software.
Power Scanner v2.0 .... £94.99
Power Scanner Colour £234.99

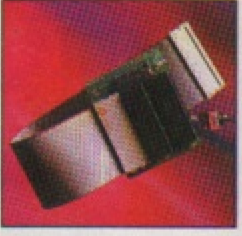
GOLDEN IMAGE-Hand Scanner Series
Features: 400 dpi • 256-Greyscale • Touch up and Merge it software.
- **AlfaScan** £124.99
- **AlfaScan Plus** £149.99
- **AlfaScan OCR** *(inc OCR Software)* £279.99

EPSON GT-6000 FLAT BED FULL COLOUR SCANNER-Plug into Amiga parallel port, 600 d.p.i. resoloution, up to 16 million colours
Phoenix Price £989.00

ASDG-SOFTWARE-Scanning software comes in two forms, integrated into art development as a new module or used as a stand-alone programme.
Phoenix Price £109.99

PHOENIX Kickstart ROM Sharer

Because some older games and business software will not run on the new Kickstart 2.04 ROM. PHOENIX have designed a sharer for both ROM chip sets. Switchable between 1.3 and 2.04 you can get all the benefits of the latest A500 Plus without the drawback of losing all your old software. Fits any Amiga 500/1500/2000.



- ***Kickstart ROM Sharer** £24.99
- ***Kickstart Rev 3/5 ROM Sharer** £27.99
- ***Keyboard Switchable ROM Sharer** £34.99
- **Kickstart 1.3 ROM** £29.99
- **Kickstart 2.04 ROM** £34.99

*(ROM Chips not included)

TRAIL BLAZERS-WHAT'S NEW IN OCTOBER 1992!

In this month's "TRAIL BLAZERS" section we spotlight some of the best newer products and peripherals currently available for the Amiga.

ROCTEC ROCLITE
This famous super slim drive has now been upgraded to include Anti-click and virus checker - THE SECOND DRIVE THAT IS SECOND TO NONE
Phoenix price £57.99

CD ROM DRIVE-A570
This essential add-on has finally arrived, suitable for A500/A500+, A570.
Phoenix price £339.99

PHOENIX 1Mb A600 UPGRADE
Simply the Best !
£44.99

STAR LC-100 COLOUR
9 PIN colour printer with paper parking, eight fonts and electronic DIP switches.
Phoenix price £159.99

A600 SMART CARDS
Utilise the advanced technology of the A600 Smart Card Expansion slot with these NEW RAM Expansion Cards direct from Phoenix. Available in 2 Mb & 4 Mb cofigurations.
- PA 6020-2 Mb £119.99
- PA 6040-4 Mb £149.99

LEADS & CABLES

Phoenix supply connecting cables in any con-figuration, call sales for a complete list and prices.
- Midi-Midi 2m £3.99
- Midi-Midi 3m £4.99
- Midi-Midi 5m £5.99
- Amiga-Scart £9.99
- *Amiga-RGB £9.99
- Joystick ext £4.99
- Joystick splitte £4.99
- *Serial/Modem £9.99
- Printer 1.8m £5.99
- Printer 2.0m HQ £7.99

DISKS

Don't confuse these quality disks with others currently available. 3.5" 100% certified error free 70% clip. All disks include **FREE** high quality Phoenix labels.

10	£4.99	200	£72.99
25	£12.99	500	£174.99
50	£22.99	750	£259.99
100	£39.99	1000	£339.99

TDK Branded disks- High performance media from the experts-box 10 with labels.

10	£5.99	100	£52.99
50	£26.99	500	£249.99

1000 Phoenix Disk Labels £9.99

AMIGA RELEASE 2

Now Only..
£79.99



The popular upgrade kit for 1.2 / 1.3 owners from Commodore is in stock and selling fast!

CALL OUR ORDER HOTLINE NOW!....
- Free Fast UK delivery
- Next-day Courier only £4.50
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- All prices include VAT

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Please make cheques payable to PHOENIX. Allow 5 working days for cheque clearance. Call our despatch line for details on our full range of delivery options both in the UK and overseas. BFPO welcome. OPENING TIMES: Mon-Sat 9.00am-6.00pm E&O.E.

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Get your hands o
computers, hand-held
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collide this December when Channel 4's GAMESMASTER is transformed into a fantastic three day festival of fun, frolics and freebies at the NEC, Birmingham, December 4th, 5th and 6th. On the mega-spectacular centre stage oil rig, the GamesMaster will preside over celebrity challenges, golden joy stick competitions and give tips from the consoletation zone. Meet the GamesMaster star Dominik Diamond and get an eyeful of the sexy diver in the flesh.





Put your free tokens to good use in the mega-arcade on all the latest coin-ops. Use your ID pass to key into the high scores table, with fab prizes for the top players!



GAMES



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To get your no doubt already sweating paws on a ticket for this jaw-s


S GREATEST SHOW
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QUASAR
Gamesmaster Live! is an essential experience for all games fans, with hundreds of the very latest releases from all the top companies. Gamesmaster Live! will be packed with big name celebrities from the worlds of pop, sport and train spotting (well probably not this last one!). Once you've bought your ticket all the features are absolutely FREE so you can save your money for all the latest and greatest bargains in the retail area.
Now is your chance to play Quasar, the live action laser game. Enter the Virgin Quasar dome. Zap the headquarters and you will go through to the "head to head" challenge with lots of exciting prizes for the winners.
GamesMaster Club members will get a specially priced V.I.P. entry ticket, so don't forget to have your membership number at hand when you phone the hotline.
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See what all the fuss is about on the linked VR machines! Blow the cack out of a friend or a complete stranger.
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CVG
Nintendo MAGAZINE SYSTEM
fill in the form and send it off to the NEC, but hurry, tickets won't last long.
4TH, 5TH, & 6TH DECEMBER 1992!
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Please send me tickets at £6.00 each.
For 4th 5th 6th (please tick preferred date). Alternative date
I enclose a cheque\ Postal order for £
Cheques payable to NEC Limited (GamesMaster)
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Please enclose a stamped address envelope. Post to GamesMaster Live! NEC Arena, BIRMINGHAM. B40 1NT. For credit card bookings, call the NEC Box Office on 021 780 4133. If you have not received your tickets within 21 days of application, please contact NEC Box Office. Cut Off date for postal applications, 20th November 1992. Discount available for GamesMaster Club members, see newsletter for details.

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Take charge of an entire planet from its birth until its death - 10 billion years later. Guide life from its inception as single-celled microbes to a civilization that can reach for the stars.



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Inspired by James Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis, SimEarth simulates the Earth as a single living organism.





CBM AMIGA

OCEAN SOFTWARE LIMITED
6 CENTRAL STREET
MANCHESTER M2 5NS
TEL: 061 832 6633
FAX: 061 834 0650

WHICH AMIGA?

Once upon a time, in a far-off land was a computer called the A1000. This is not that story. Instead it is a roundup of all the latest and not so latest Amigas that can be found for sale this Christmas. Each model is described briefly with its capabilities, price and options to help you decide which model best suits your needs.



A600

The new 'home computer', recently cut in price to appeal to the game console crazy public. Originally to be called the A300, it was finally released earlier this year, a few months after the A500Plus. Opinion was divided at launch – some like it, some don't. At the present time, expansion capabilities are severely limited because this machine lacks the 86-pin edge connector.

Price: £299. With 20Mb hard drive £499.
Kickstart: 2
Workbench: 2
Processor: 68000
Standard memory: 1Mb
Maximum chip memory: 2Mb
Maximum fast memory: 8Mb
Maximum total memory: 10Mb
Chip set: Enhanced Chip Set.
Expansion capabilities: Rom switchers will work. Extra 1Mb chip memory may be inserted into the A500 incompatible trapdoor. Adding RAM this way will be slightly more expensive, as special 'flash-ram' will be required. PCMIA slot should allow some IBM-type PC peripherals to be attached.
Note: No monochrome video output, built in RF modulator for direct connection to TV set.
Hard Drive: Yes – internally fitted as option.
Commodore CD-ROM Drive: Eventually

CDTV

No matter what Commodore used to say, this is an Amiga in a new box. Initially sales have been disappointing, but have picked up a bit in recent months when the marketing boys decided to own up to the fact that the UK's best selling home computer was lurking inside it. Although it is basically similar to an A500Plus with a CD-ROM drive attached, you may find that some software will fail to load due to the machine's higher memory overhead.

In Multimedia terms CDI is a strong rival – maybe not on the software side, but Philips are throwing a lot of money at their product. Perhaps CDTV2 will change that?

Price: £399.
Kickstart: 2 (slightly different version to that in the A500Plus)
Workbench: 2
Processor: 68000
Standard memory: 1Mb
Maximum chip memory: 2Mb (with third party card)
Maximum fast memory: 8Mb via third party card
Maximum total memory: 10Mb
Chip set: Enhanced Chip Set.
Expansion capabilities: Rom switchers will work. General expansion capabilities though are fairly limited, not least by the fact that not many peripherals will fit into the case. Hard drive option available soon.
Hard Drive: soon
Commodore CD-ROM Drive: Yes



A1500



Commodore UK's own attempt at a custom machine. It's nothing more than an A2000 with no hard drive and two floppy drives. Check Kickstart and Workbench when buying, as many dealers offer an upgrade as standard.

Price: Shop around for best deal.
Kickstart: 1.3/2.0
Workbench: 1.3/2.0
Processor: 68000
Standard memory: 1Mb
Maximum chip memory: 1Mb
Maximum fast memory: 8Mb via internal expansion boards.
Maximum total memory: 9Mb
Chip set: Normal.
Expansion capabilities: Lots. Seven internal 'Zorro II' slots for hard drives and memory. Processor slot for accelerator cards. Video slot for video cards, flicker fixers etc. Unique PC function – slot in a bridgeboard and you have a fully functional PC – complete with PC compatible expansion slots for hard drives and video boards. Probably the most flexible computer ever built. Vastly underrated.
Commodore CD-ROM Drive: Perhaps.

A2000



The Amiga for serious users. Comes in a huge ugly box, and has lots of expansion capabilities. Check Kickstart and Workbench when buying, as many dealers offer an upgrade as standard.

Price: Shop around for best deal.
Kickstart: 1.3/2.0
Workbench: 1.3/2.0
Processor: 68000
Standard memory: 1Mb
Maximum chip memory: 1Mb
Maximum fast memory: 8Mb via internal expansion boards.
Maximum total memory: 9Mb
Chip set: Normal.
Expansion capabilities: Lots. Seven internal 'Zorro II' slots for hard drives and memory. Processor slot for accelerator cards. Video slot for video cards, flicker fixers etc. Unique PC function – slot in a bridgeboard and you have a fully functional PC – complete with PC compatible expansion slots for hard drives and video boards. Probably the most flexible computer ever built. Vastly underrated.
Hard Drive: Yes – internally fitted.
Commodore CD-ROM Drive: Perhaps.

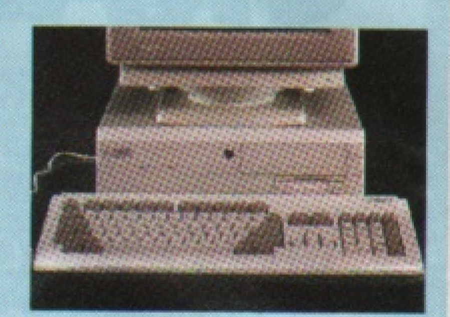
A3000



The machine that everyone thought would be the next generation of Amigas, but wasn't. Prices have dropped markedly in anticipation of the A4000. The 3000 may be used to replace the A2000, or perhaps be dropped entirely.

Price: From around £1499
Kickstart: 2
Workbench: 2
Processor: 68020, 16/25 MHz
Maximum chip memory: 2Mb
Maximum fast memory: 16Mb (but theoretically much more)
Maximum total memory: ?
Chip set: Enhanced Chip Set.
Expansion capabilities: Slightly cut down A2000 style. Some A2000 cards (notablt the original Video Toasters) wouldn't fit into the new small case. Expansion slots are now multiplexed Zorro III standard, allowing greater flexibility. 32-bit memory expansion available on the board via ZIP chips.
Hard Drive: Yes as standard.
Commodore CD-ROM Drive: Don't hold your breath.

A4000



Latest Amiga, featuring '040 processor and AGA chip set offering a large number of different screen modes and impressive 24-bit graphics. Also includes high density drive and newest version of Workbench. Check out the authoritative review elsewhere in this issue.

Price: Probably from around £2500
Processor: 68020, 16/25 MHz
Maximum chip memory: 8Mb
Maximum fast memory: a very large amount
Maximum total memory: see above
Chip set: AGA chip set, also known as 'AA' or Super-ECS
Expansion capabilities: Slightly cut down A2000 style. Some A2000 cards(notable original Video Toasters) wouldn't fit into the new small case. Expansion slots are now multiplexed Zorro III standard, allowing greater flexibility. 32-bit memory expansion available on the board via ZIP chips.
Hard Drive: Yes as standard.
CD-ROM drive: near future

A500

The original 'home computer' – the version which everyone who couldn't afford an A2000 would buy. It was supposed to be unexpandable, so serious users would buy the A2000. However, ingenious third-party developers have since created A500 versions of just about every gadget under the sun, and plugged them in anywhere they could find space. If you are buying second-hand, they are not worth more than £200 in prime condition.

Price: Discontinued.
Kickstart: 1.3
Workbench: 1.3 (can be updated)
Processor: 68000
Standard memory: 1/2 Mb
Maximum chip memory: 1Mb (half a meg on older versions) expandable to 2Mb with additional third-party card or a bit of fancy soldering.
Maximum fast memory: 8Mb
Maximum total memory: 9Mb
Chip set: Original PAD. 1Mb Agnus (half a meg on older machines)
Expansion capabilities: trapdoor slot for additional memory (officially just another half meg, unofficially up to 8Mbs of RAM or a PC emulator)
Expansion capabilities: 86-way edge connector for hard drives and/or memory. Chips on motherboard may be removed for addition of accelerators, rom changers and extra memory.
Hard Drive: Yes (extra)
Commodore CD-ROM Drive: Yes (extra). Needs 1Mb chip ram.

A500Plus

The shortest-lived Amiga so far. Was this computer a 'mistake' brought on by a lack of original custom chips? For whatever reason, the A500Plus is essentially a Workbench 2 version of the A500, with the new ECS chips. The operational differences are that several new screen modes are available and that a lot of old games software won't work. Although discontinued, you may still find some of them in smaller high street stores. Some people prefer them to the A600, since they can use third-party hard drives and various other expansions that are incompatible with the A600. It also has a numeric keypad for flight sims, but alas suffers from incompatibility problems with almost all games launched more than a year ago.

Price: Discontinued.
Kickstart: 2
Workbench: 2
Processor: 68000
Standard memory: 1Mb
Maximum chip memory: 2Mb
Maximum fast memory: 8Mb
Maximum total memory: 10Mb
Chip set: Enhanced Chip Set.
Expansion capabilities: As A500.
Hard Drive: Yes (extra)
Commodore CD-ROM Drive: Yes (extra).

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Choose your profile from the ones listed below and we'll pick out the system that best suits your needs.

Games Junkie – The bog standard A600 is all that you need. Well, you'll probably need a joystick and some Biactol as well actually.

Hobbyist – An A500 Plus, if you can find one. This will give you lots of ports to hang things off with the added advantage that the case is easier to open. If not, the A1500 is quite a good buy.

Professional – A nice A2000 will suit you. Plenty of expansion capability, but make sure you get a Workbench 2 version. The A3000 might be an option, depending on what you want it for.

Poser – The CDTV is black, so the choice is obvious unless you are a rich poser, in which case the A4000 might be worth a look.

Techno junkie – Very similar needs to the poser, so the CDTV and A4000 are in with a shout, but the more financially disadvantaged may go for the A3000. Failing that buy an Archimedes – now there's some really obscure and underused technology for you.

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SCREEN SCENE

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First

It's been a hectic month here at First Impressions with so many companies beating a path to our door that we had to bolt it shut. Strictly on a first come, first served basis, here's the latest batch of new games which will be appearing on an Amiga near you soon.

BC KID
UBISOFT

If you thought *Chuck Rock* was a laugh, just wait until you meet the latest prehistoric star. *BC Kid* is a new platform romp coming soon from French outfit, Ubisoft, and features a cute'n'cuddly baby caveman as its dino-bashing star. Set over five taxing levels and landscapes, it's up to our young cave-dweller to roam the game's many stages searching for his kidnapped girly. Some lush animation, cracking sound effects and fast and frantic gameplay ensure that this one should be a smash hit this Christmas.

The game has been coded by Hudson Soft, the development team behind the excellent *Dynablaster* released earlier this year. Like that game, *BC Kid* is also a conversion from the PC Engine, although the game was originally known as *PC Kid*. We've had a demo disk of the first two levels in the offices for a couple of weeks now and we just love it. There's still a lot of work to do on the later stages and much of the sound has yet to be implemented, but from what we've seen it looks like Ubisoft could be onto a winner.



IMPRESSIONS

DARKMERE
CORE DESIGN

Long, long ago in a land far, far away... Stop it, I've had enough! How many times have you heard that old cliched storyline used to accompany a new game? Well, here it is again with *Darkmere*, a 3D isometric adventure from Core.

The hero in *Darkmere* is Ebryn, a young Elven prince. His father, Gildorn, was banished from the Elven race many years ago for helping the humans slay the dragon, Enywas. Out of deep gratitude, the humans made Gildorn their King. Sometime later, Gildorn met and fell in love with a beautiful elven woman, Berengaria, found wandering, memoryless, in the forest. They married and Berengaria became pregnant. Shortly before the birth she disappeared into the forest leaving the child, Ebryn, in a clearing. Frantic with despair Gildorn forgot about his Kingly duties and the country fell into ruin. Orcs attacked villages and a great cloud of evil, the Darkmere, was cast over the land. Determined to find out and eradicate the cause of this great evil, Ebryn sets forth on a quest for knowledge. Armed only with his trusty magic sword, which glows in the presence of evil, he could be in for a hard time...

This is where you come in. Using a joystick to control Ebryn's movement across the land you'll need to search locations, question locals and, if you so desire, beat the stuffing out of them to find a cure for the curse.

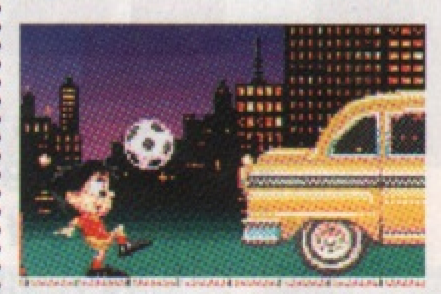
Visually, the playing screen is very similar to *Cadaver*, that extremely underrated Bitmap game from a couple of years ago. Apparently, there should be no need for keyboard typing as words will be selected from an available list, which will increase as Ebryn interacts with the other characters. The use of sound in *Darkmere* should be something special. As in real life the sampled sounds will increase in intensity if Ebryn is facing the source, and the closer he is to it the louder the samples will become. This has been implemented using something called the Direction Orientated Sound System, which is a rather complex piece of coding. Sounds (no pun intended) nifty!

Puzzle and clue solving will form a large part of *Darkmere* with verbal interaction taking place on pull down scrolls. But, if you decide to hack and slash your way through the adventure you'll have just as good a chance of success. However, indiscriminate slaying of good characters will be penalised because Ebryn's blade will suck his life force out. So handle that blade with care! *Darkmere* should be released at the end of October.

SOCCER KID
KRISALIS



In our August issue we took a look at Krisalis's spectacular new ball'n'platform game. Since then, the game has come on in leaps and bounds (well it *is* a platform game after all) with a lot of interest being shown by Nintendo and Sega. The game's also had a name change from *Football Kid* to *Soccer Kid*, a much more marketable title in the global scheme of things. Sorry to hark on about it, but this really is a white hot game. We've just received a playable demo of the first level and it's a blinder. The number of trick shots is incredible, the scrolling is already silky smooth, and there are lots of hidden rooms and bonus points to collect along the way. Unfortunately, due to the console interest, the game's been delayed until next year, but at least that gives us a chance to do a massive In Development on the game in an upcoming issue. Definitely watch out for this one – it's going to be huge!



REALMS OF DARKNESS
GRANDSLAM VIDEO

Featuring a 3D isometric playfield similar to that featured in *Populous, Realms of Darkness* certainly looks the biz if nothing else. The plot's a bit incomprehensible, though, as it waffles on about some poor geezer's soul being damned to eternal life and being passed down through the ages from father to son. Years pass and the latest recipient of the Necromancer's soul is having a few bad dreams about it all, to say the least. Not happy with continually wetting his bed, the young man decides to set out and discover his destiny. Oops, big mistake! The brown soggy wet stuff is about to hit the fan...

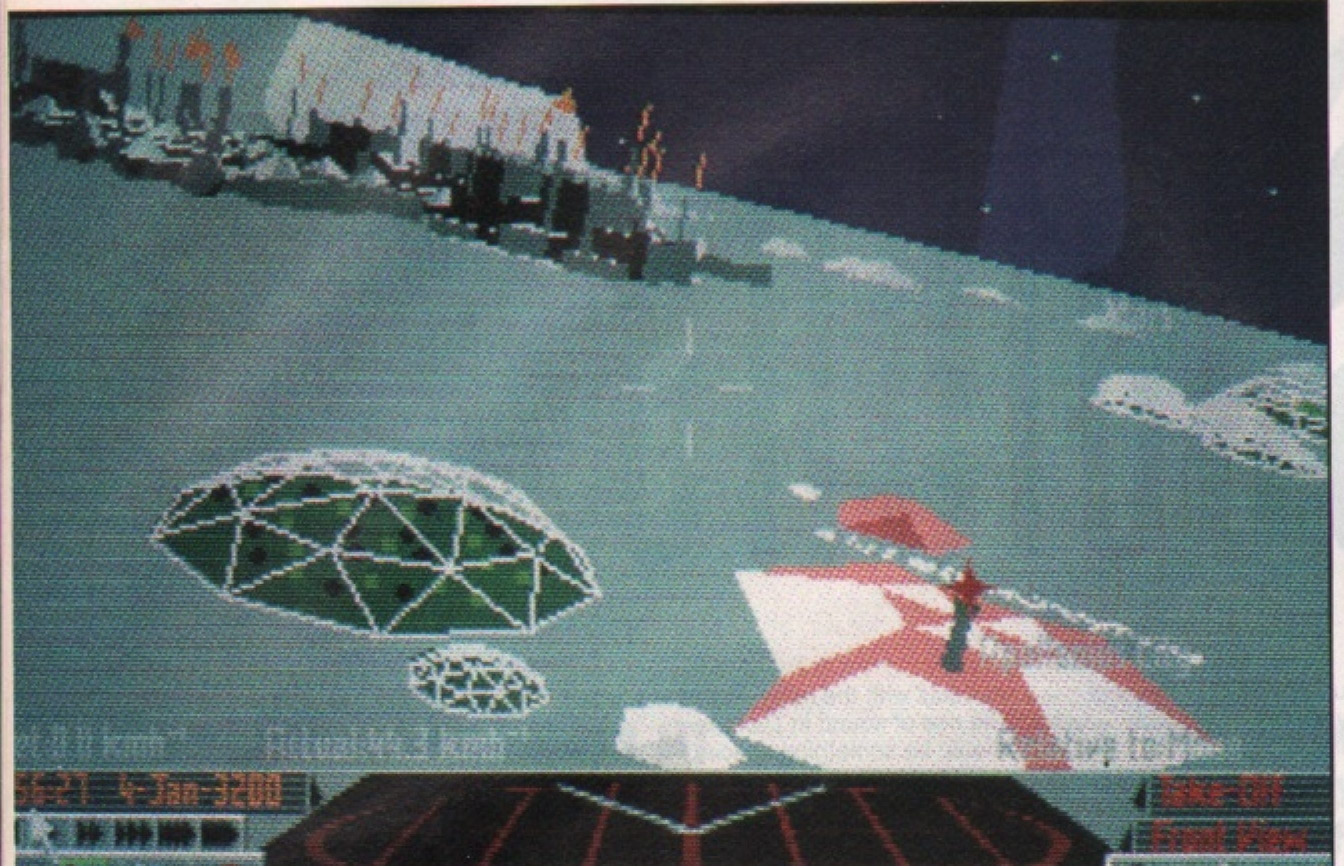
Realms of Darkness is an RPG which features multi-directional scrolling across a 3D landscape. There are six main quests to the game which all revolve around the plight of the Necromancer and the mysterious Tower which dominates the skyline in this strange and foreboding land. Your own personality attributes affect the computer's reaction to the player under your control and there are plans afoot to implement 'one of the most sophisticated magic systems yet seen in an RPG'. Other features worth a mention are a realistic weather system, 2D location screens with parallax scrolling, hundreds of in-game beasts and pitiless peasants to slay and rob. Phew. We've only seen a pre-production demo (unplayable), and there's still a way to go before the game's complete. The chances are that the finished product will be radically different to this preview. Expect an In Development feature soon.



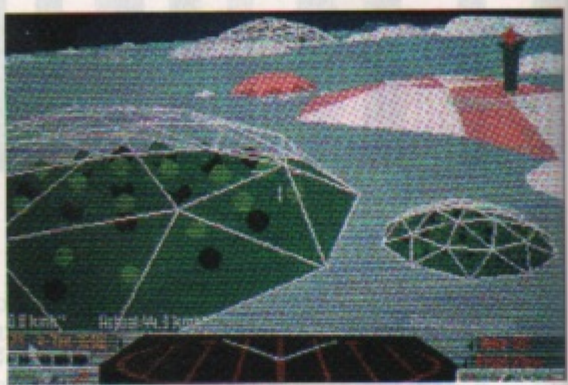
MYRA – THE LEGEND
GRANDSLAM VIDEO

Superficially, you could be forgiven for thinking that *Myra* is just another *Boulderdash* clone. There are the usual rock falls and teleporters littering each level and the whole shebang takes place in a series of underground caves. However, that's were the comparison ends, as the game is much more complex than that. Grandslam have thrown everything but the kitchen sink into this one, as there's abolutely tons to do over the game's 150 levels.

The story is typical 'cute-'til-you-puke' fare with the game's star, a cuddly wuddly bunny rabbit, setting out to free the world's food stores which have been moved underground by mankind. (Look, don't blame me, I didn't write this twaddle!) Each level is made up of a number of tunnels and traps and there's a special 10-level introductory section to ease you into the game. Expect the game sometime early next year.







Each major city has a spaceport – you can see other ships land, take off, fly past and occasionally crash.

FRONTIER

Possibly the most hyped release of 1992, Rik Haynes asks if *Elite II* has really been worth the wait...

ULTIMATE ELITE

Regarded by many as the ultimate computer game, *Elite* did boldly go where no game had gone before. First released on the BBC microcomputer back in 1984, this sophisticated space sim was eventually followed by a lacklustre Amiga conversion some years later. Now, after a mammoth four years in development, the sequel is nearly here. David Braben, co-author of the original and one of Britain's most respected games programmers, is staking his reputation and future on what is likely to be the only true epic ever released on the Amiga.

'I always knew *Frontier* (*Elite II*) was hellishly ambitious and wouldn't come out for a very long time,' Braben reveals. 'I wasn't even sure if some of the things I wanted to do were actually possible. I always like games that are different and stand out. I liked *Populous* but got quite annoyed by *Federation of Free Traders* (*FOFT*) from Gremlin. I think it shows some programmers have got no imagination'.

Apart from all the code crunching, Braben has a burning passion for astronomy and science fiction stories. *Elite II* is a product of this combination of interests. Braben has managed to squeeze our entire galaxy onto a single floppy disk. That includes every planet, moon and star for an estimated area of roughly 100,000 light years. To put this into perspective, the original game contained 2,000 planets. *Elite II* has over 100,000,000,000! Not even NASA would be foolish enough to attempt this feat with the most powerful supercomputers in the world. Many of today's top scientific theories and informed guesswork have been incorporated into Braben's routines to generate individual planets and entire solar systems. Not only that, Braben has totally revamped the graphics system in the new game. He always wanted to produce freeform 3D images that verge on the quality of hand-drawn bitmap sprites. In addition, Braben decided to implement a complicated trick to give the illusion of having 4096 colours on screen at the same time. It took a lot of effort to get right but the results of this self-imposed holy grail for smart graphics can't fail to impress.

> ***'I don't think any of the Super NES games are any good. Console players have been lolled into thinking a good game has to have Mario or Sonic in it'.***
> **David Braben**

His baby closely follows in the footsteps of its illustrious predecessor. Set in the distant future, players are thrown into a fantasy gameworld full of classic sci-fi icons like spacecraft, orbiting docks, traders, mercenaries and pirates. At the core of the caper, you're supposed to crush the competition, grab the cash and create a massive interstellar corporation. Of course, there's a lot more to explore and experience this time round. Many gameplayers would like to be Luke Skywalker, Captain Kirk or Barbarella. This is probably the closest any of us will get to realising these dreams.

'I thought the emphasis would be different when I started the project,' insists Braben. 'My original plan was to hang the whole thing around the military. It's now much more varied and exciting. The gameplay is open-ended and loose. Although you can still trade, this is very much a background thing. You can communicate with other characters

Some of the 50-odd spacecraft incorporated in *Frontier* are almost 20 miles in length! If you earn enough money, you'll be able to fly all of them.

Welcome to the engine room of *Elite II*. From these bulletin boards, found in space stations and planetary ports, you can make repairs, buy new ships and weapons, and sort the next mission out.

Space is pretty big! It's necessary to use star charts to navigate accurately. After all you wouldn't want to warp into a black hole.



You might be forgiven for thinking you'd just walked on to the set of 2001 – A Space Odyssey.

ELITE II

Careful now! This is the shot from the pilot's seat as you attempt to dock without touching the sides.

in the game, do deals, make enemies and friends and earn good or bad reputations. You may be asked to do things which are totally illegal like smuggling illicit goods or giving passage to criminals.'

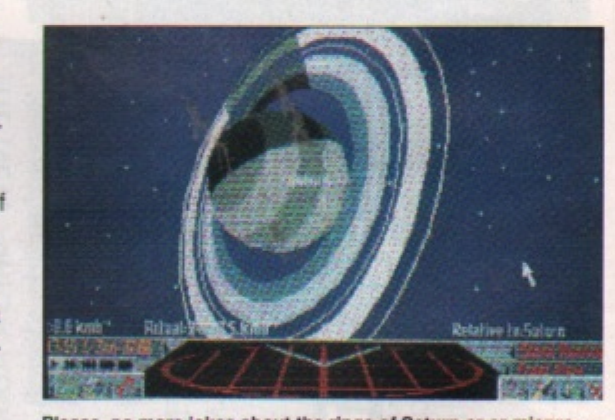
Unlike before, you can travel through outer space and blast down onto the surface of any planet and polish your flying and dogfighting skills in more traditional simulation surroundings. These brave new worlds have realistic curved surfaces, fractally-generated continents, seasons, night/day time, mountain ranges, lakes, rivers, forests, polar regions, deserts, roads, bridges, cities, lights, buildings, advertising hoardings, missile sites and spaceports. Even the shading of objects and their shadows are correctly coloured and cast in relation to the position of nearby stars. It's a bit like creating worlds and spaceships out of a super Lego and Meccano set of bits and pieces.

Dismissive of *Wing Commander* and other such space operas, Braben thinks these games are just one long graphic sequence which you can tweak occasionally.

'Most other games developers just burn memory ridiculously,' explains Braben. 'There's been a nasty move in the USA where people are saying how good a game is by the number of disks it comes on. Any old fool can fill disk space with frivolous bumpf. Players expect megabytes of graphics and sound to be lavished upon a product these days. On the whole, I think it's a bit like weighing a book and saying how good it is. It discourages me. Sounds and pictures are very easy to compress'.

> *'There's nothing worse than going down to the pub and still talking about computers'.*
> **David Braben, author of Elite II**

He adds: 'I want *Elite II* to be a complete science fiction world so that I can implement more adventures in the future. Still, it's not only going to be a vehicle for extra mission disks. I don't want to turn *Elite* into a lifelong project'.



Please, no more jokes about the rings of Saturn or or mispro-pounciations of Uranus.

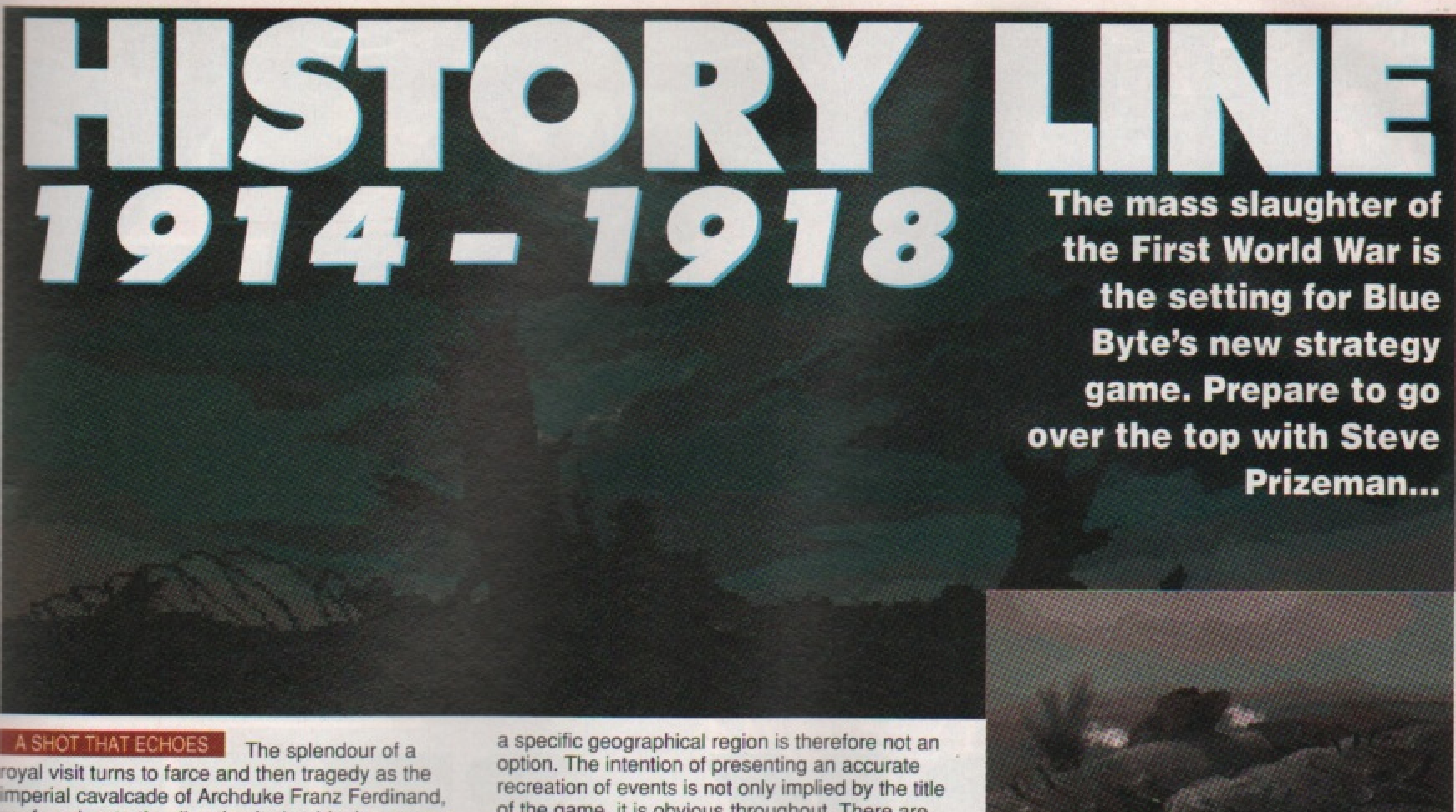
Well Toto, I don't think we're in Kansas anymore. Time to switch on the autopilot and sit back with a cup of tea.

BAYWATCH

It's the neat little touches that make a classic game stand out from the crowd, right? At the exact coordinates of San Francisco in California, Braben has a twisted ruin of the Golden Gate bridge with just the towers sticking up out of the water – the pathetic survivor of a great earthquake. 'It's just a little in-joke,' says Braben. 'Mainly because most flight simulations concentrate on the bay area so much'.

TITLE: *Frontier* (*Elite II*)
PUBLISHER: Konami
DEVELOPMENT TEAM:
- Design, Program, 3D Graphics and Sound Effects: (David Braben)
- Bitmap Graphics: (Paul Mitchell)
- Music (Michael Powell)
- Publisher at Konami: (Colin Fuidge)

RELEASE: January 1993
PRICE: TBA



HISTORY LINE 1914 - 1918

The mass slaughter of the First World War is the setting for Blue Byte's new strategy game. Prepare to go over the top with Steve Prizeman...

A SHOT THAT ECHOES The splendour of a royal visit turns to farce and then tragedy as the imperial cavalcade of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, confused as to the direction it should take, pauses to turn around – beside a desperate terrorist. The gunshots fired into the ducal car that June day in 1914, killing Franz Ferdinand (heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire), have echoed down the decades, along with the consequences of the First World War, which they triggered. That the city in which the Archduke died was Sarajevo, and the man who killed him a disgruntled Bosnian, can certainly give you the impression that Europe's troubled past is haunting its present.

Philosophising aside, what Blue Byte has here is a wargame which it hopes will surpass the success of *Battle Isle*, its combat game set in a far-flung future. Plugging what it considers a gap in the range of strategy games currently available, Blue Byte has produced a recreation of the First World War combining the control system of the earlier game with carefully researched detail. The appearance, capabilities and availability of tanks, planes, artillery and other death-dealing machinery, are claimed to be historically accurate, and reflect the pace at which new developments occurred during the conflict; players receive upgraded armaments according to a realistic timetable as the game progresses.

TIME AFTER TIME As you may have already guessed, the game unfolds chronologically, with battles being fought in the order they occurred during the war. This makes the action switch between different theatres of war, such as from the western to the eastern front. A campaign concentrating on a specific geographical region is therefore not an option. The intention of presenting an accurate recreation of events is not only implied by the title of the game, it is obvious throughout. There are options for one and two player games and a choice of whether to control the 'Allied' forces (the Entente powers – England, France, Russia and, eventually, the USA) or the 'Mittelmachte' (the Central Powers – Germany and Austria-Hungary). The fighting you control, however, represents only an engagement within the battle from which it is taken: in other words, if you play the Mittelmachte forces, and win every engagement, Germany will still lose the war. The past cannot be rewritten and the history line continues unchanged from the car in which the duke was shot to the railway carriage in which the armistice was signed in 1918.



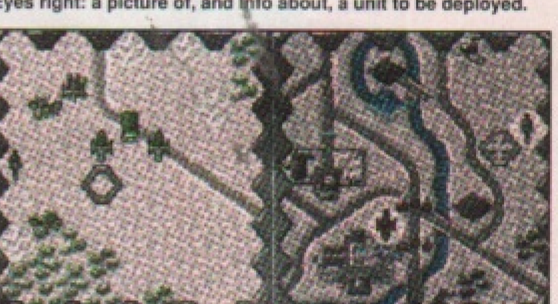
READ ALL ABOUT IT As with *Battle Isle*, players control their forces by watching an aerial view of them on a map of the relevant battleground and deploying them accordingly. Information about the military hardware may be displayed beside the maps. Changing seasons, varying quality of road surfaces, the ability to gain 'energy' from cities, and increasing the strength of an attack by outmanoeuvring the enemy, are all considerations to be borne in mind by the players. The game is controlled by joysticks or joypads, but not in the way that shoot 'em ups are – the dramatic battle sequences that follow the placement of the armed forces are not interactive. In between battles, screens appear displaying newspapers, medal presentations and contemporary text and pictures giving factual information about the stage the war has reached. Blue Byte is, in fact, keen for the game to be seen as an educational tool, as well as a satisfying strategic challenge, and has received enquiries about it in those terms. The educational information will be repeated in the manual accompanying the game.

INTO THE VALLEY OF DISKS *History Line* will come on no less than six disks, occupying 10Mb when unpacked and installed on a hard disk. I am assured, however, that frequent disk swapping will not be required. Priced at a probable £34.99, or less, *History Line 1914 –1918* will be released in mid-November. If it lives up to expectations the finished version should certainly be worth seeing – after all, how often do you get to fight through the death-throes of empires?

Tanks, battlefield Goliaths which were an innovation of the War, assault the enemy trenches as shells explode around them.



Eyes left: a map showing units awaiting strategic direction. Eyes right: a picture of, and info about, a unit to be deployed.

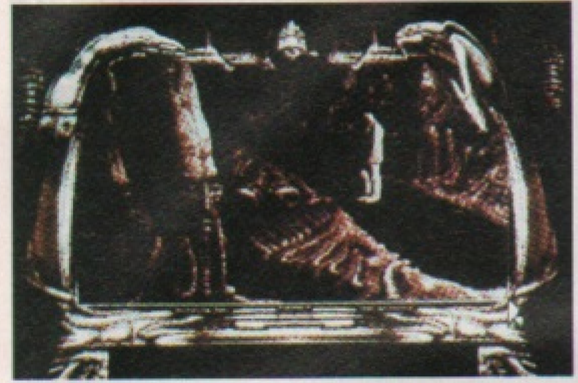


A bird's eye view of the battlefield. Survey your troops from a safe Olympian height and direct them to their targets.

TITLE: History Line 1914 – 1918
PUBLISHER: Blue Byte (Hertzler + Schmitt GmbH)
DEVELOPMENT TEAM:
- Programming (Ralf J. Kraft, Bernhard Ewers and Oliver König)
- Graphics (Thorsten Knop, Janos Toth and Christoph Werner)
- Music and Effects (Haiko Ruttmann)
- Co-ordination (Lothar Schmitt and Thomas Hertzler)
- Research (Ralf J. Kraft and Ulrich Albert Springmann)
- Manual and Weapons Research (Thomas Hertzler and Lothar Schmitt)

RELEASE: Mid-November
PRICE: TBA





These screenshots certainly ain't suitable for the faint hearted! Artist H.R. Giger has also worked on the movies Poltergeist II and Alien³.



Hmmm... isn't this the house from Psycho? No way. Every good horror story must have a well-stocked library somewhere in the plot...

DARK SEED

Do you want to see something really scary? Rik Haynes takes a look behind the scenes of Cyberdreams' new graphic adventure...

FACE HUGGING EXCITEMENT Who can forget that haunting bit in the original Alien movie when the wee space beastie bursts out of actor John Hurt's stomach? Obviously this sickening scene had a profound effect on Cyberdreams. That's why this newcomer to the world of entertainment software has enlisted the help of artist H.R. Giger for its first game. This Swiss surrealist actually created the Alien creature and other pieces of acclaimed fearsome fantasy artwork. Many of these eerie Giger images have been incorporated into *Dark Seed*, despite some initial apprehension on his part regarding the 'square and jagged' look of computer games.

After selecting a portion of Giger's work for each of the 75 background locations in *Dark Seed*, the artists at Cyberdreams' software labs in Los Angeles used Newtek's *Digiview 5.0* digitising equipment to transfer these nightmarish images into their machines. A video camera was also used to record live actors performing the actions of every character in the game. Next, these elements were cleaned up and proportionally sized in *Deluxe Paint III* and *IV*. Perspective tools in these leading art and animation packages were brought into play to create doors, walls, floors and so on. Finishing touches such as highlights, shadows and translucent overlays were then added. Simple, huh?

'The macabre art of Giger provides an atmospheric background in this most unusual of graphic adventures.'

What about the game itself? Well, it's a graphic adventure with a gruesome theme. That much you know already. Through a simple point 'n' click control system, players explore a crumbly old house and their own subconscious in an effort to unravel the mysteries of an evil civilisation of biomechanical creatures.

Dark Seed, released on the PC earlier this year, has attracted mixed reviews from the specialist press thus far. So, how will Amiga players react? Find out soon.



You can't easily escape from the developers of Dark Seed. Not only did they devise the game, but digitised representations of their voices and themselves also come with this caper.

MOVIES, MOVIES, MOVIES

Hollywood, eh? Palace of greed, gallery of special effects and a great place to publish Amiga games! At least, that's how the company blurb for Cyberdreams goes. The mission to create high quality entertainment software with creative input from award-winning movie makers and scriptwriters is well underway. *Cyber Race*, due for release next year, is a futuristic racing simulation based on the designs of Syd Mead. He's the guy who helped visualise the look and feel of *Blade Runner*, *Tron* and *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*. Mead says: 'Designing *Cyber Race* is another expression of my desire to participate in the future. Vehicles and racing have always been a fascination for me so I have really enjoyed being involved in the development of this project.

TITLE: Dark Seed
PUBLISHER: Cyberdreams
(Distributed in the UK by Mirage)
DEVELOPMENT TEAM:
- Design: (Mike Cranford, Mike Dawson, Harald Seeley and Lennard Feddersen)
- Programming: (Lennard Feddersen and John Kruase)
- Amiga Programming: (Andrew Whittacker)
- Artwork: (H.R. Giger)
- Art and Animation: (Brummbaer, Paul Drzewiecki, Julia Ulano, Joby Rome-Otero and Paul Ryan)
- Music Score: (Gregory Alper)
- Music and Sound Effects: (David Bean)

RELEASE: January 1993
PRICE: TBA

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Chocks away, chaps . . . as Jonathan Sloan dons his Biggles costume to look at Virgin's new World War II flight sim.

REACH FOR THE SKIES

I am sure that few of you will remember, but 'Reach for the Skies' was the name of a film detailing the exploits of Douglas Bader, a rather heroic legless (as in no legs, not blindingly drunk) pilot. What better name then for a potentially rather spiffing World War II flight sim.

The scenario revolves around the Battle of Britain, World War II's single most ferocious air battle. The player can join either the British or the German side and have control over eight different aircraft. These include such famous planes as the Ju87 (or 'Stuka'), the Heinkel bomber, the Hurricane and the Spitfire. After choosing sides, the player can decide whether to take to the skies straight away as a pilot or control the action from the ground as a . . . well, controller. This strategic element to *Reach* is one of the elements that could potentially lift the game over others in its genre. As a controller your strategic capabilities will be stretched to their limits as you juggle options such as where to place the fighters, which factories to build planes in, and how many brave pilots to send to their deaths! Of course, deaths are something to avoid as the controller has the job of not only maintaining air superiority, displayed as a percentage, but also of keeping the pilots' morale up. These two factors can be negatively affected by German bombing of airfields, factories and convoys. The aim for the Brits is to keep that percentage up above 75% as a drop below means that those evil Nazi swine have got air superiority and will wipe out dear old Blighty. However, if life as a controller becomes tiresome the player

'What did you do in the war, daddy?' Make your choice from this screen.

can simply choose to transfer to be a pilot at any stage. Planning will then be left to the computer while you get on with the job of blasting the Hun (or those jolly British pilots, if you decide to be a Jerry) from the sky.

TAKE TO THE AIR Once in the cockpit, pilots will be able to start on the runway or in the air. This may not seem like a great innovation at first but once you've played the game for a few weeks it will feel like a godsend. All regular flight sim players will no doubt be familiar with the views available from the cockpit. In addition to those, *Reach will* offer an especially useful combat view which, once in a dogfight, centres the screen on the enemy plane allowing you to practice more complex flight patterns with ease.

TAKE TO THE AIR The actual tactics used in the Battle of Britain, both overall and by pilots themselves, will be reproduced faithfully and the flight simulation model is accurate. Of course, if you choose to play the Germans it might be a good idea to alter tactics (if you want to win that is!). In the real thing, the battle was split into four phases, each representing a different set of tactics employed by the Germans. In *Reach* the player will be able to choose which phase to start in. It's wise to start at the beginning of the battle as each stage represents a progressively harder scenario involving more intense enemy activity. Having survived a mission, the pilot is debriefed (the game position can be saved here) and shown reports on the state of the battle. If you manage to bag an enemy you may be rewarded with a medal. However, if you fail to make it back you will be rewarded with a view of the plane spiralling in flames before being thrust back into the cockpit for an extreme close-up of the impact. Over the Channel this involves a splashdown complete with concentric rings of water flowing away from the crash. On land the plane will always crash onto a farm (pity the poor farmer). This is a pilot in-joke, as the slang at the time referred to a crash as having 'bought the farm'.

PC OR NOT PC Despite having been developed on the PC, *Reach* has converted well. The filled polygon planes move smoothly across the skies even when full of enemy planes. Ground detail is sparse but doesn't detract from gameplay. Also, the game will feature some atmospheric sampled sound of inter-pilot communication. It remains to be seen, however, whether the opening sequence of digitised war footage and pseudo-Churchill sampled speech will make it onto to the Amiga version. The usual question of memory capacity comes to the fore again. The developers, Rowan, have managed to compress the data onto two disks. One acts as a game disk, so none of that tedious disk swapping will be involved. The down side of that though could be the time taken to access the disk. As can be expected the game will need 1 Mb to run.

HISTORY Rowan Software has a long and proud history of excellent flight sims. The team that worked on *Reach* are also responsible for the excellent *Falcon* and, more recently, *Flight of the Intruder*. This latter game received 92% from CU back in October 1991, but suffered badly in sales due to the Mirrorsoft crash. *Reach*, too, looked wobbly for a time before it was taken up by Virgin. It started production in August 1990 and was almost ready for release when Mirrorsoft keeled over last December. Rowan took the opportunity to tweak bits of the game that they weren't quite happy with. Originally, *Reach* looked and felt more like a true strategy sim based on the Battle but now has developed in the gameplay department to what promises to be a different mix of strategy, flight sim and blast 'em' out of the skies. Personally, I am not a big fan of flight sims but this one has got my juices flowing. We'll bring you a full review next issue.

EVERYTHING COMES IN PHASES

Reach offers budding pilots the opportunity to start at the beginning of the Battle of Britain or at any of its component phases.
Phase one: (July 10 to August 8, "Convoys"). The German High Command concentrates its bombers on the convoys bringing supplies to Britain.
Phase two: (August 9 to August 12, "Eagle Eyes"). The target here was Britain's early warning radar net.
Phase three: (August 13 to September 6, "Eagle"). Emphasis shifted to frontline airfields.
Phase four: (September 7 September 15, "Blitz"). The German High Command's final phase was to call for a heavy bombardment of London itself.

CHOICES, CHOICES...

Budding air aces can try out eight planes in *Reach*. Each has its own flight characteristics and should offer a sufficient challenge before you are able to stand toe to toe with the enemy and slug it out.

- Spitfire IIA: A good all-round fighter used to great effect by RAF pilots, it became the best remembered British fighter aircraft.
- Hawker Hurricane I: This was the first operational RAF aircraft to reach speeds in excess of 300mph. It was eventually outmatched by the Spitfire, which could both climb and fly faster. Even so, far more Hurricanes flew in the Battle than any other British fighter aircraft.
- Messerschmitt Bf 109E–4: This was a popular choice for German fighter pilots. It suffered from heavy handling and a cramped cockpit but overall was a superior machine to any of the British fighters.
- Messerschmitt Bf 110C–4: The zerstörer (or destroyer) failed abysmally against the more modern single-engined fighters and suffered appalling losses.
- Heinkel He 111P–2: A bomber beginning to show its age by the time of the Battle. It suffered from inadequate firepower in comparison to the British fighters.
- Dornier Do 17Z–2: Another old twin-engined bomber, largely withdrawn by the end of 1942.
- Junkers Ju 87B–2: Famous for its piercing scream in attack, the Ju87B (or Stuka) did great physical and psychological damage to ground troops. However, once separated from its fighter escort it was easy pickings for enemy fighters.
- Junkers Ju 88A–1: As a multi-purpose fighter/bomber, the Ju88A saw service throughout the war.

Take to the air with a computer controlled wingman.

Perform amazing aerial aerobatics; bank, turn and crash!





Tally ho chaps, bandits at one o'clock



Use this map to view the state of the battle.

GUNSHIP 2000

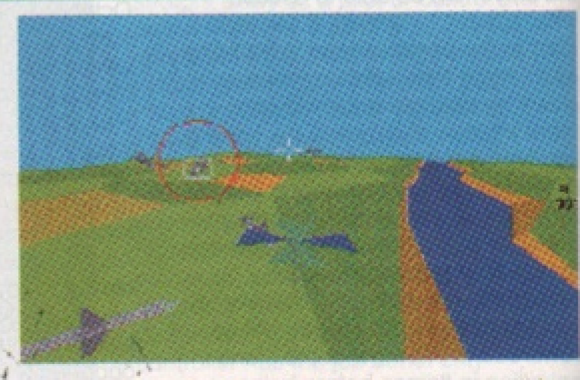
Steve Prizeman gets his hands on Microprose's new chopper... Nudge, nudge, say no more.



The original Gunship only allowed you to fly the aging Apache 'copter. This time around there are seven more helicopters at your disposal to help you blow away the opposition.



The first Gunship sold by the bucket full, and Microprose expect to do the same kind of business with this much-improved sequel. From what we've seen, they probably will.



APOCALYPSE? WOW! Cue *The Ride of the Valkyries.* A flight of fearsomely-armed attack helicopters sweep across the skyline, grim determination announced by their relentless rotor-blades, flinging rocket-propelled death toward the enemy below... phew! It can mean only one thing – *Gunship 2000* has taken to the air. MicroProse's new helicopter flight-simulation, a successor to the award-winning, million-selling *Gunship*, is due for release in mid-November, following its conversion from the existing PC game.

Although it was a 'multi-copter' game, the original *Gunship* simulated only the AH-64A Apache attack helicopter. The new model, on the other hand, offers a whole Farnborough Airshow's worth of high-tech hardware. Up to eight types of aircraft may be flown in the game. Blackhawk, Comanche Scout and Gunship, Kiowa, Cobra and Defender helicopters may be piloted, in addition to the trusty Apache. It is possible for the player's pilot to progress in rank with the successful completion of missions, acquiring a team of four wingmen, each with a helicopter. These wingmen may be sent on missions of their own, gaining credit for their commander (the player) through their independent action. At higher ranks use may be made of a Longbow Apache: a meaner machine with a mast-mounted camera allowing sneaky spying on the enemy over buildings and other obstructions.

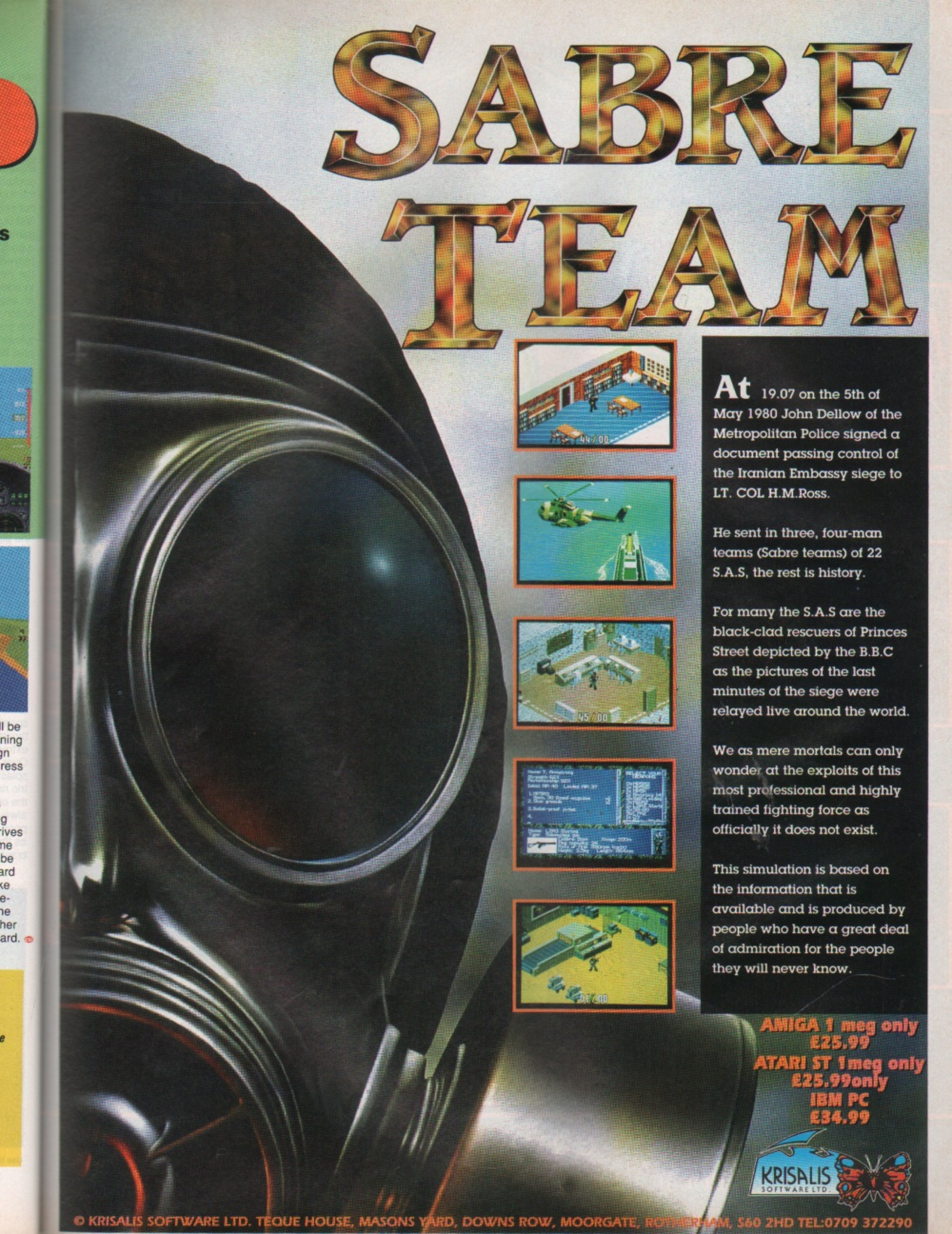
FLAK AND FLARES A wide range of weaponry is also available, including a 30mm cannon, Stinger, Sidewinder, Hellfire and Penguin (*Penguin?*) missiles, allowing air-to-air/land/and sea combat. Chaff and flares are provided to help deflect flak. But, with a variety of enemy units to fight, whose equipment includes wire-guided anti-aircraft missiles, things may still get quite hot. The helicopter will react to the damage it sustains, steering erratically, for example, rather than simply continuing as normal then suddenly plummeting from the sky. The player does, in fact, have the option of disengaging his rotor blades, if he wants to fly like a brick or really put his ability to control the machine to the test. The action may be viewed from outside the helicopter, if the player wants a different perspective on events, but it will be necessary to keep a careful eye on the radar if nasty surprises (like fixed-wing aircraft bearing down upon your pilot) are to be avoided.

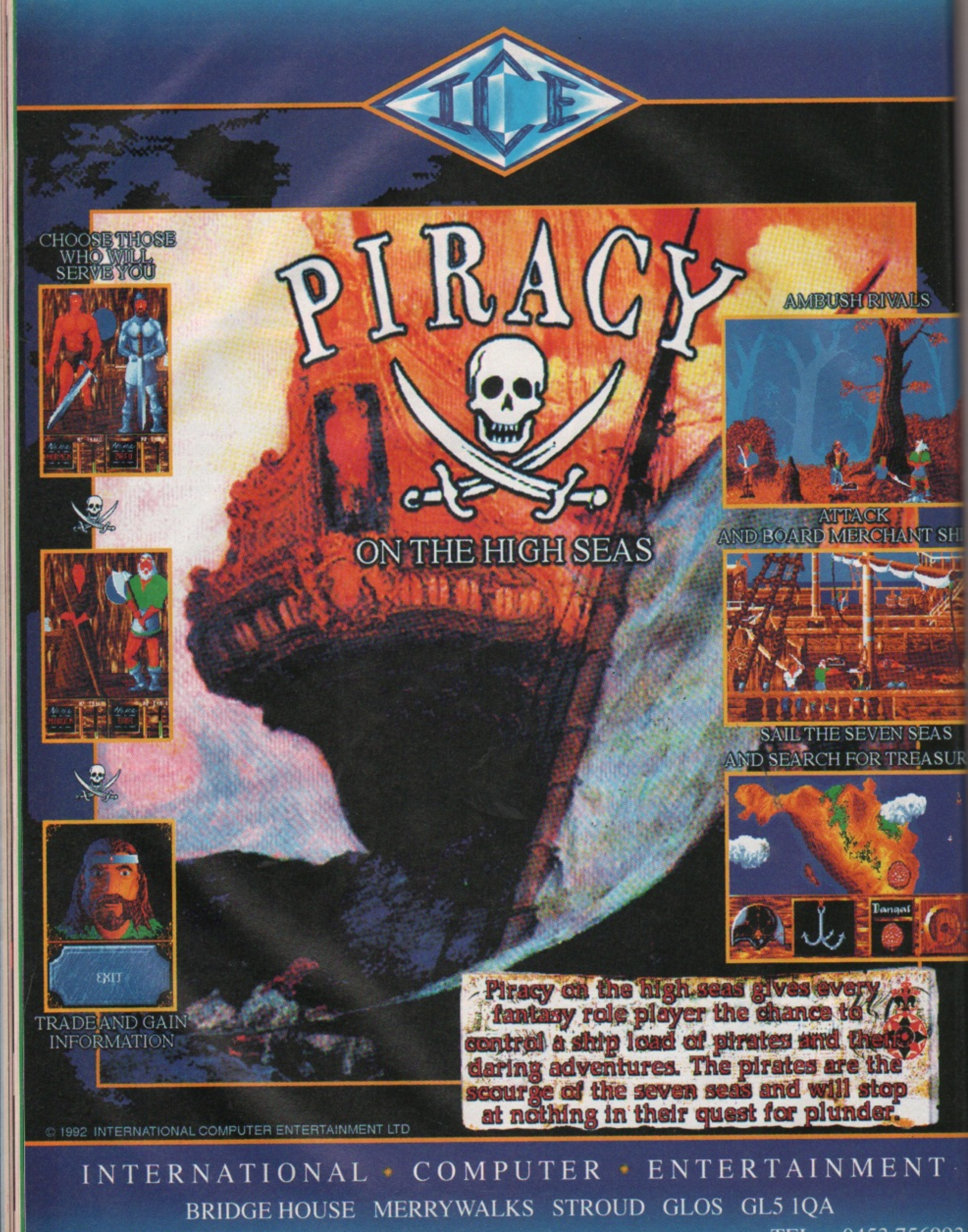
STEALING A MARCH ON THE MARKET 'The incredible interest we've seen in *Gunship* over the years encouraged us to use the technology and experience we've gained since its release four years ago, to create a product several years ahead of any other title on the market', says Bill Stealey, President and co-founder of MicroProse. Missions are set in Central Europe and the Persian Gulf, with the randomly-generated terrain producing appropriate scenes of sea and sand, or rolling plains crossed by roads and railways. MicroProse claims a new development called Topographical 3D Graphics allows the creation of realistic landscape by displaying both depressions, such as rivers and valleys, and elevations, like mountains and buildings. In *Gunship 2000* the player will be able to design, edit and save missions. A training option wil also be available, as will a campaign game incorporating a map revealing the progress the player is making against his enemies.

SIZE ISN'T EVERYTHING, YOU KNOW *Gunship 2000* will run on all types of Amiga possessing 1Mb of Ram, and may be installed on hard drives (probably occupying 2Mb). The game will come on three or four disks, but disk-swapping will be kept to a minimum for Amiga-users lacking hard drives. It is planned that change-overs will take place at 'natural breaks', such as between scenarios, rather than in mid-flight. It is also on the cards that the game will be controlled with either a mouse and keyboard, or joystick and keyboard.

TITLE: Gunship 2000
PUBLISHER: MicroProse
DEVELOPMENT TEAM: The team converting *Gunship 2000* from the PC were also behind the *Knights of the Sky* conversion.
- **Project Manager: (Jonathan Oldham)**
- **Programming: (Kevin Buckner, Mark Langerak and Mark James)**
- **Graphics: (Paul Aylisse and Eddy Garnier)**

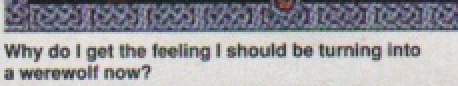
PRICE: £34.99
RELEASE: November 1992


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Boy, this is one hostile castle! I'd like to know who did the decorating.



Why do I get the feeling I should be turning into a werewolf now?

UNIVERSAL monsters

Calling all spook fans! With more celluloid nasties than you can shake a crucifix at, Ocean's forthcoming spine-chiller is taking shape. Tony Horgan takes a peep from behind the sofa.

OOH MUMMY Ocean are taking no chances with *Universal Monsters*. Instead of relying on one big name spook to pull the punters, they've signed up six! Lead by team captain Count Dracula, the line-up consists of Frankenstein's Monster, The Bride of Frankenstein, The Wolf Man, The Mummy, and finally The Creature from the Black Lagoon. As you can probably tell from the cast, the original storylines have been reworked in classic Hollywood style, and merged into one, so as to bump up the fear-factor as much as possible.

Here's the deal. Deep in the heart of the Austrian Alps, lived Professor Van Helsing. The small village community that surrounded Helsing's mansion had been plagued by the aforementioned band of spooks for as long as anyone could remember. Deciding that something had to be done, Van Helsing began a battle against the forces of darkness. With his expertise in all matters ghostly, he eventually managed to drive them back to the underworld.

RITES AND WRONGS In order to keep them from breaking free once again, Van Helsing performed an annual rite, which strengthened the gate that kept them from Earth. This was only made possible by the presence of a magical amulet known as the Bloodstar. However, time caught up with the ageing Van Helsing, and once the Grim Reaper had paid his visit, Dracula's posse began to stage a comeback.

All looked lost, until Van Helsing's grandson arrived in town. After popping into the greengrocer's for a few bulbs of garlic, Helsing Jr made his way to the family mansion to declare war on the evil spirits.

This is where you come in. Strolling through the front door of the mansion, you're confronted by The Count and his cronies. Taunting you with the amulet, Dracula then smashes it into five pieces, which somehow manage to get scattered aroupd the mansion. A challenge is set by His Unholiness – find all five fragments of the amulet, and be rid of the evil forces forever. Fail, and the nasties take up permanent residence.

CRYPT-IC CLUES As for the game itself, you can expect an isometric 3D arcade-adventure, something along the lines of The Bitmap Brothers' *Cadaver*, or the old Spectrum classic *Knightlore*. Along with the five fragments of the amulet, you've also got another six items on your shopping list. Each monster can only be destroyed with the help of a particular object. Dracula succumbs to a confrontation with a crucifix, and Frankenstein's Monster can be unbolted with a spanner. Together with a mirror, a silver bullet, an ankh, and a harpoon, you should be able to finish off the lot.

Plenty more lesser ghouls are sprinkled around the mansion to make life even harder. Haunted suits of armour, zombies, dead pharaohs, snakes, skeletons and bats are among the new inhabitants. Not only do you have to contend with these beastly foes, but the building itself is also haunted. Previously innocent stone idols come alive, spitting fire at passers by. Spikes appear from the floor, and flagstones disintegrate on contact. Perhaps worst of all are the Batman-style walls, which close in and crush the helpless adventurer. We're also promised some sub-aqua sections whilst in the vicinity of that old 50s B-movie star, The Creature from the Black Lagoon.

Along with the intro sequence, there'll also be a couple of Game Over animations. The first will be a brief affair illustrating your downfall, while the second will congratulate you with a more elaborate display, should you actually complete the game. Whether it can match the lofty standards of *Cadaver*, only time will tell. All going well, *Universal Monsters* should be out in time for the Chrimbo rush. We'll bring you a full review in the next issue.



Van Helsing had better watch where he's going, unless he wants to end up as a shish kebab.



This Dracula fella sure likes his spikes – good job you've brought your industrial strength underpants!

ISOMETRIC EVOLUTION

The game draws on infuences from a whole family of isometric 3D adventures. Not least of these was *Head Over Heels*, regarded by many as one of Ocean's greatest ever. This itself was preceeded by the grandaddy of them all, Ultimate's *Knight Lore*. Let's hope that *Universal Monsters* lives up to that pedigree.

TITLE: Universal Monsters
PUBLISHER: Ocean
DEVELOPMENT TEAM:
- Coding (Mike Solsall)
- Graphics (Simon Butler, Martind McDonald)
- Sound (Barry Leach)

Level Design (Simon Butler, Martin MacDonald)
RELEASE: Mid-November
PRICE: TBA

LETHAL

Our very own Vietnam Vet (well, he acts shell-shocked) Mark Patterson takes an exclusive look at Ocean's stunning new licence.



The Dockyard level involves the player in displaying considerable control over their joystick as Murtaug or Riggs have to hop from boat to boat in pursuit of their chosen quarry. Miss your footing and you fall into the murky river and lose valuable energy points into the bargain.

LETHAL BOX OFFICE

Joel Silver's trilogy of Lethal Weapon films are undoubtedly one of the movie success stories of recent years. If you're one of the few people who are unfamiliar with them, they star Mel Gibson as Martin Riggs, a whacko LA cop who's gone from suicidal to near-homicidal in the first two films and his straight-laced partner Roger Murtaug, who's played by Danny Glover. As you might expect, Riggs is always dragging Murtaug into dangerous situations while cracking one-liners and shooting every villain in sight. Despite this limited formula the third film, which was released this summer, was another box office hit.

Rather than opt to produce a game based on just one of the films, Ocean have gone the whole hog and taken aspects from all three movies, as well as coming up with a plot of their own. To get around the problem of the film having two main characters and there not being a two-player mode in the game, you can choose to play either Mel Gibson and Danny Glover. There are no advantages to either character, even though Roger Murtaug is old, slow and constantly complaining in the movies.

CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS

The object, quite simply, is to get your chosen hero through a series of levels in one piece, while blowing away as many bad guys as possible in the process. What this boils down to is a platform game where timing and shooting accuracy are the order of the day.

The game is divided into four levels. The first is set in a dockyard which is run by an organisation of drug dealers and racketeers. Here the dynamic duo have to board a ship and recover a wad of drug money and put paid to the criminals for good. Part of this level involves swimming underneath a pier to get the drop on some drug dealers. Unfortunately, there's a shark with a taste for cops in the area, and if you're not quick he'll drain your energy. There are also ninja frogmen, who spring out of the water and unleash a volley of machine-gun fire.

After that is a Subway stage, complete with train, where the aim is to foil a gang's attempt to hold the city to ransom by placing bombs underneath it and threatening to set them off. The bad guys now have cop uniforms and come in full riot gear. They haven't got bullet-proof vests though, so they're easy to kill. From there it's onto the subway car, where your problems are compounded by the lights which flicker on and off, often leaving you shooting in the dark.

Leo Getz makes an unwitting appearance on the third level, where he's being held hostage beneath a dingy old factory. Now you're facing enemies armed with flame throwers. These don't have the same range as guns, but they cause more damage and you can never tell when they're going to fire. These three levels can be played in any order. When you complete them you enter a fourth stage, which is marked in the manual as classified, so you're going to have to find out about that for yourselves as I'm not going to spoil the fun.

YOU DON'T GET A STUNT DOUBLE

Unlike their big-screen counterparts, Riggs and Murtaug aren't bullet proof in the game. They both have energy gauges which deplete every time they're punched or fall a

ALTERNATIVELY

Altogether, the Letahl Weapon trilogy of moves clocks up an impressive six hours of mindless mayhem. You'd think with such material to work from that Ocean could have picked some good bits. Here's our list of what scenes should have been included in the game.

ROGER'S EXPLODING TOILET

Lethal Weapon 2. Roger Murtaug is sitting on the pan, behind is a bomb, in front Riggs. Play Roger and try to complete what you started doing by carefully tapping the joystick so you don't set the bomb off. Or play Riggs – should you cut the red wire, or maybe the blue one?

MARTIN'S MAGIC SHOULDER

You are Martin Riggs, capable of dislocating your shoulder at will. Convenient when you're strapped-up in a straight jacket. Waggle the joystick real fast to run at a wall then hit the button to turn side-on and bash it out.

SURF BOARD DEATH CAR CHASE

You're after a South African gunman, he's driving a truck and you're doing an impression of a hood ornament on the front. Goad the driver into swerving to throw you off as you try to make him steer into the path of an on-coming vehicle, so he crashes and gets his head smashed in by a low-flying surf-board. And you thought it was an unfortunate accident!

WEAPON

CU AMIGA SCREENSTAR



Despite a seemingly endless supply of bullets, you'll run out eventually if you've not taken care to pick up the many power-ups that litter each level.

At times the action is relentless. It seems as if the underworld gangs have recruited an entire army in their efforts to blast you to smithereens.



The most striking thing about the game is the sad lack of colours. Endless blues and greys don't really lend themselves to what is, in all honesty, just a polished platform game. It all just looks a little bit dull.

As in all the best platform games, there is endless jumping and obstacles to avoid, as well as the incumbent nasties. Once you've reached the construction site you'll find yourself jumping around like a chimpanzee.

long distance. Some enemies are armed with machine guns and rocket launchers though, and one hit from either of these means an early retirement for the character on the receiving end. Very long drops are also fatal, so you can bet that the game's designers have included a good few.

Murtaug and Riggs aren't entirely defenceless. They're armed with pistols and an unfeasible amount of ammunition. A display in the top-left of the screen shows how many bullets are left in the current magazine, and how many magazines they have in total. Should the unthinkable happen and they run out of bullets, they can kick their enemies out of the game. Although running straight up to a machine-gun toting ninja and hoping he stands still while you axe kick his head isn't an advisable course of action.

There are no special weapons to collect, but most levels contain packing crates and oil drums which explode when shot, killing everyone nearby. If you time it right you can take out two or three bad guys at a time. Many enemies can be avoided by taking another route through the level, but more often than not they just jump out of nowhere so you're forced to deal with them. It can often take a few bullets to down a foe, so sometimes it's actually worth dropping behind and kicking them. It pays to move quickly, as most of the villains can shoot through platforms and home in on your position if you hang around for too long.

CONTINUITY? WHO NEEDS IT?

Lethal Weapon's programmers have taken a few liberties with the plot. For instance, do you remember the shark in Lethal Weapon 2? Or how about the lamppost climbing scene from Lethal Weapon 1? You must remember the bit from the third film where Riggs and Murtaug perform a balancing act on a series of moving blocks in a police car park? No? Didn't think so.

LETHAL WEAPON 1

The first film was the most violent of the lot. It opened with a young lady throwing herself off a sky scraper, then carried on with shooting, jokes, torture, more shooting, more jokes and the odd car chase. It led to ITV slicing about ten minutes off the movie when they screened it earlier in the year. The film also boasted some fantastic stunts, although one went tragically wrong during the scene where Riggs lept from a building handcuffed to another man. The Riggs stunt-double got up off the air-bag straight away, but the person he jumped with landed wrong and snapped his neck. The movie culminated with psychotic henchman, Joshua (played by Gary Busey) being shot by Murtaug and Riggs in Murtaug's front garden.

The game features a few backdrops which are vaguely connectable with the film, plus plenty of nebulas henchmen whose only purpose, as in movies, is to die before their boss does. Lots of opportunities for mayhem there, I think.

WHAT'S ON THE BIG SCREEN?

The graphics are small, but very detailed, although the Riggs sprite looks more like Shakin' Stevens than Mel Gibson. The backgrounds are very plain though, and much more could have been done with them. On the other hand, the levels are absolutely huge. The majority are large multi-directional scrolling affairs, populated with various characters from the movies. The way through them normally lies through a series of doorways, which are dotted throughout such types of level, behind which are more hazards



Both the film and Ocean's platform game might be out and out action – it's just a shame that the two are completely divorced from each other.



To get past this lot, it's best to shoot for the oil drums which, when snagged, blow up everything within their range.

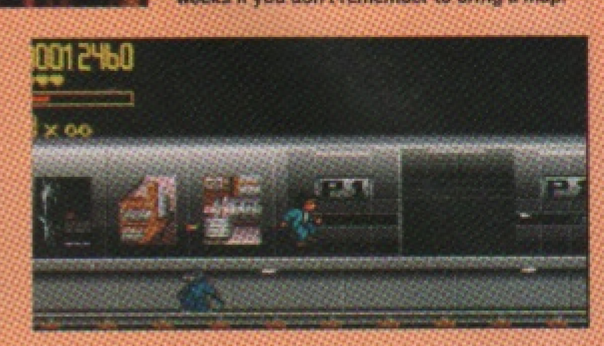
The sneaky bar steward. It's totally unfair when the enemy decides to take a pot shot from the platform above. The rotters.

An endless collection of corridors form part of one level. You could be wandering around for weeks if you don't remember to bring a map.



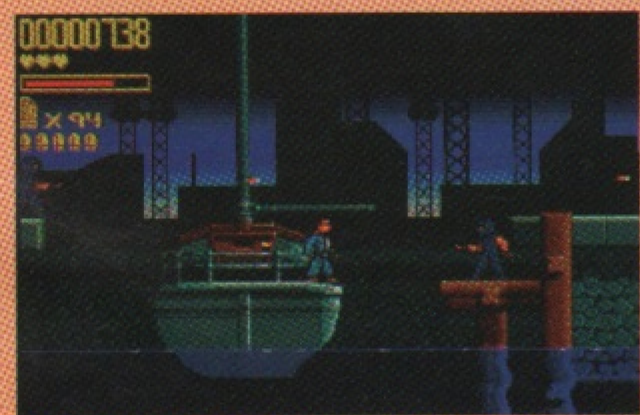
Rocket launchers provide just a part of the arsenal that the underworld gangs possess.

Despite their drab appearance, each level throws up its own surprises. Enemy intelligence is a bit on the shallow side though, as these two henchmen prove as they attempt to shoot each other.





Don't fall into the acid baths as this will cost you valuable amounts of energy.



Here you've got a choice: you can either shoot it out, jump for it, or try your luck at a bit of underwater swimming.

LETHAL WEAPON 2

For this film the violence was toned down and the humour turned up. The plot revolved around a bunch of South Africans involved in Krugerrand smuggling who took time off to drown Riggs' girly (played by Patsy 'fairy bubbles' Kensit) and blow up half the LA PD serious crime squad. This film featured the best car chases out of the three, and as we've said elsewhere, it's a shame that they weren't included in the game.

The opening scene of the game is set in the dockyard where the final part of the film took place. There are several tricky bits, including a section where you have to get around a bunch of crooks by swimming under a pier in shark-infested water.

such as moving platforms and massive drops. There are some variations on this theme though. One level is a maze of small corridors, many of which are blocked by electronically opened security doors. The objective here is to find the switches which activate them. Your efforts are hampered by collapsing floors, which give way as soon as your character treads on them. Another takes place in a subway train. The graphics for this stage only take up about a fifth of the screen, but they're very effective none the less. The initial dockyard level stage has our heroes jumping from mast to mast to get past some ships and warehouses. This bit is quite tricky, because all the jumps are different lengths.

MORE THAN A PLATFORM

I wasn't very impressed when I first saw this game. I'd been expecting something a bit more than a platform game. Ocean have already produced more fair share of this type of game (*Total Recall, Addams Family, Hudson Hawk, Robocop 2* and so on). A very good example of something different is the excellent *Robocop 3*, which is one of those rare breeds of film licences where the game actually captures the atmosphere of a movie. Despite its haggard style *Lethal Weapon* is still a very playable game. The levels are large enough to keep you occupied for quite a while and there's plenty to do. It's also very addictive and challenging without being frustrating.

Fans of the film will no doubt be disappointed by the lack of tie-ins in the game. The movies had some excellent car chases and the inclusion of one of the those wouldn't have gone amiss. As it stands it would have been a lot cheaper for Ocean had they just changed the graphics and given the game an original title. No one would ever have connected it with the film. Having said that, this is a very good platform game, but nowhere near as good as Ocean's previous movie-to-platform game licence, *Addams Family*.

It's likely that it will do very well in the charts, especially in the run-up to Christmas. However, it remains to be seen whether it will run for as long as the film series.

LETHAL WEAPON 3

In the most recent instalment the lads are up against an ex-cop who had a nice little number going with stolen weapons and drugs. Naturally, there are all the usual one-liners and this time they shoot people with armour-piercing bullets. This film cost several million more to make than the previous two, mainly because it opened with the demolition of a nine-floor building and closed with the burning down of a gigantic wooden building. All good clean fun.

There's one scene in this film where Riggs hairs off down a subway tunnel, which belongs to the LA PD, in pursuit of a train. Naturally that would be a bit boring in the game, so instead you're actually on board the train doing what Riggs does best, shooting everything in sight.

buyers guide

release date	November
genre:	Platform
team:	In-house
controls:	Joystick
numbers of disks:	1
number of players:	1
hard disk installable:	No
memory:	Any machine

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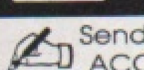


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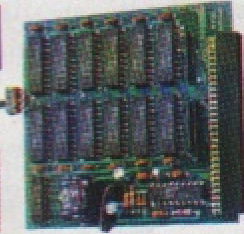
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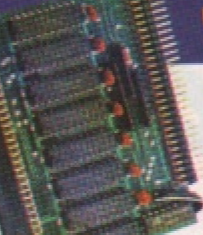
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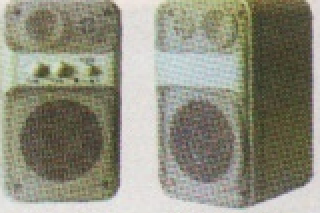
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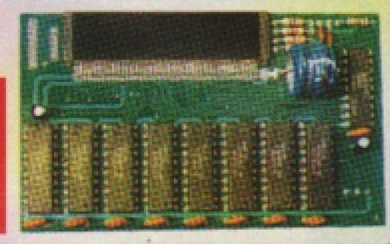
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What is Stereo Master

Stereo Master is a low cost, high quality sound sampler for the Amiga range of computers. The sampler cartridge included in this package plugs into the printer port at the rear of the computer and allows you to analyze the sounds coming in from devices such as Personal Cassette Players, Compact Disc Players etc, or change the way they sound using the Real Time Special Effects or record them. Once in the computer STEREO MASTERS unique editor will enable you to edit the sound in practically any way you can imagine. Once you have the sound sample how you want it, you may incorporate it into your own Demo's or use STEREO MASTERS own built in sample sequencer to play back the sample in sequence with other samples!

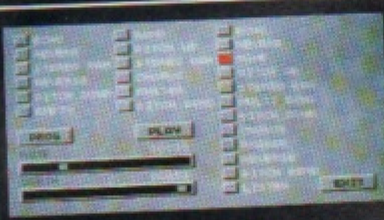


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- Playback volumes
- Decrease volume
- Increase volume
- Bounce sample
- Paste sample
- Trigger recording
- Clear left/right samples
- Loop sample



THE SPECIAL EFFECTS CONTROL PANEL

The Special Effects Software

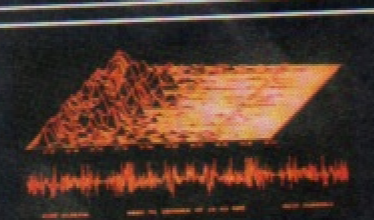
For the first time ever you can emulate special sound effects in real time just like the sound labs can for film studios, normally the hardware to produce these effects would cost 100's of times more than this package. Features on the FX menu include;

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- Fully programmable special effects so that customised effects can be recalled

The Analytical Software

A whole host of pro-type analytical functions include;

- 3D display of sample frequencies (Fast fourier transform)
- 3D display also includes 2D envelope display plus sample information.
- Built in Stereo spectrum analyzer
- Stereo Oscilloscopes with trigger markers



3D DISPLAY OF SAMPLE FREQUENCIES (FFT)



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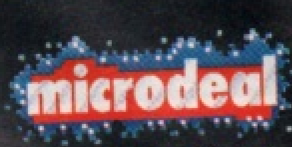


THE SEQUENCER CONTROL PANEL

The Sequencing Software

Our built in sample sequencer allows you to take up to 18 samples (memory permitting) and sequence them into your own "tronic" mixes, features on the sequencer include;

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- Step time entry of sequences
- 2 stereo channels for sequencing
- Storyboard style editing
- Digital sequence position display
- Fast forward/rewind controls
- Program sample to keypad
- Stand alone demo player displays IFF picture whilst playing sequence
- Sequence copy function
- Loop sample
- Selectable sequence speed
- Dump/re-edit function
- Test function
- 2 octave playback
- Insert/delete sample in step time



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DOODLE BUG

Always one for a bit of scribbling, Jon Sloan grabs his pencils and puts some colour into Core's latest platformer.

What you can see will probably hurt you. Apart from the psychotic itinerant street musician and his dangerous notes the steam from this train will burn Doodle badly.

STOP ME IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS ONE

Did you hear the one about the small unlikely hero who volunteers to rescue the princess from her evil kidnapper? If you haven't then where the hell have you had your head buried? For those more enlightened amongst you the plot for Core's new platformer will seem familiar.

The hero is Doodle Bug, a brave little arthropod, who has come forward to save the Princess Lady-Bug from a shadowy abductor. Armed only with a handful of coloured pencils and an eraser, he scours the length, breadth and platforms of Cartoonia for the poor princess.

Cartoonia, being an unlikely land, is populated by a bunch of unlikely bad guys, including a ball tossing clown and a street musician whose notes are lethal. Fortunately for Doodle, his pencils are magic and, once thrown, immediately draw a variety of useful objects. Unfortunately, he only has a limited supply, although these can be increased by picking the extras up which are scattered over the various platforms.

Apart from the magic pencils which can also be thrown at enemies, Doodle has one further line of attack. He can leap boldly into the air and perform a somersault, just like a rather spiky console character I could mention! If you manage to get Doodle from one end of the screen to the other, and within the time limit, he has to take on the 'oh so familiar' end-of-level guardian. These seem daunting at first but have a very predictable pattern which can be learnt and beaten with a little practice.

OOH, LOOK AT THOSE PRETTY COLOURS

There's a lot to see on screen, most of it in garish colours. All the characters and backgrounds have a bright, cartoony feel to them. Doodle himself is a cute little character in a crash helmet. He is drawn well and moves competently, but there's nothing really special about his animation.

ORIGINALITY

Overall, this is a capable platformer. However, *Doodle* is seriously deficient in the originality stakes. Many of the game and plot features are close copies of, if not blatant ripoffs from, many better and slicker console games. If you're really desperate for a console-type platformer you'd be better off investing 25 quid in *Zool*.

buyers guide

release date	October
genre:	Adventure
team:	Adrian Cummings
controls:	joystick
numbers of disks:	1
number of players:	1
hard disk installable:	No
memory:	All machines

CORE DESIGN £25.99

" An average platformer, lacking in flair and style "

GRAPHICS	75%
SOUND	60%
LASTABILITY	67%
PLAYABILITY	75%

OVERALL 70%

CAPTAIN DYNAMO

Ever wondered what superheroes do when they retire? Jon Sloan has the answer...



PUT IN YOUR FALSE TEETH

Captain Dud would possibly be a better name for this sub-standard platformer. The usual cliched plot involves arch-fiend Austen Von Flyswatter, who has stolen the world's largest diamond collection. You play doddering superhero Captain Dynamo, called out of retirement to foil Von Flyswatter's evil scheme and retrieve the diamonds. The hoard has been scattered over several booby-trapped levels of the bad guy's castle which you traverse in an attempt to recover the loot. On the face of it the scene has been set for a potentially enjoyable romp. It's a pity that the game doesn't live up to such expectations.

The central character's sprite is fairly well drawn and animated. I particularly like the way he leaps into the air, à la Superman. The background and platforms gel well with each other and have a good cartoony feel to them. A useful touch is the regular placement of transporters around the game area which, once activated, are the points to which Dynamo is returned if he loses one of his three lives.

It's at this point that the praise has to stop. Despite the reasonable animation, there is simply not enough happening on screen to make it visually interesting and too few enemy sprites (only three at any one time) for the game to be challenging in the joystick department. Basically, the gameplay becomes too repetitive after a very short while.

As a budget release this could be one for that wet Wednesday afternoon if you've got absolutely nothing else to do. However, perhaps because I've seen this type of game done so much better, I found it rather tired and dated.



Leap stiffly into action as the world's only geriatric superhero. Von Flyswatter's castle is laced with traps, so watch your step.

buyers guide

release date:	Out now
genre:	Platform
team:	In house
controls:	joystick
numbers of disks:	1
number of players:	1
hard disk installable:	No
memory:	All machines

CODEMASTERS £7.99

" Go to sleep...it's more fun than this... "

GRAPHICS	50%
SOUND	40%
LASTABILITY	25%
PLAYABILITY	30%

OVERALL 42%

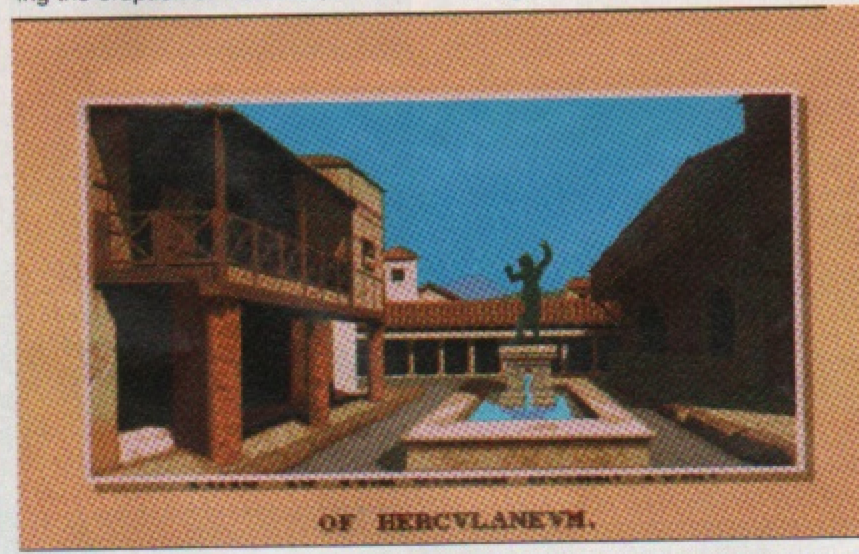
Our very own Little Caesar, Mark Patterson, has spent a lot of time giving orders. So we decided to send him back to....

ROME AD92

MEET A SCRUBBER AT THE BATHS

Life was never easy in Roman times. You had either been conquered by them, were working for them or, in Hector's case, a slave to them. Hector is a slave with ambition though. He believes the gods are smiling on him, and that he's going to go places. In fact, all the time he's actually starring in a computer game where you control his actions.

The aim, quite simply, is to help Hector climb the lengthy Roman social ladder from the position of slave, right at the bottom, to emperor at the precarious top. The first step on this pathway to success is escaping the eruption of Vesuvius, which just happens to be right next to the hamlet where he lives. This is where his break comes as he's separated from the house-hold that owns him. Before leaving he has to collect as many items as possible which will aid him in the game's next six stages. The trick here is finding the one road that leads from the town. Do this by tracking down key characters and asking questions. To begin with you can only question or threaten people, and be warned, nobody takes kindly at someone from the lower classes threatening to cut their head off. This can be a bit limiting, as nearly everyone gives you the same answer until you find the person or item they're telling you about.



Glorious fill-in scenes abound in *Rome*. This one appears at the start and is used to describe the plot. Try not to see the ones describing Hector's death.

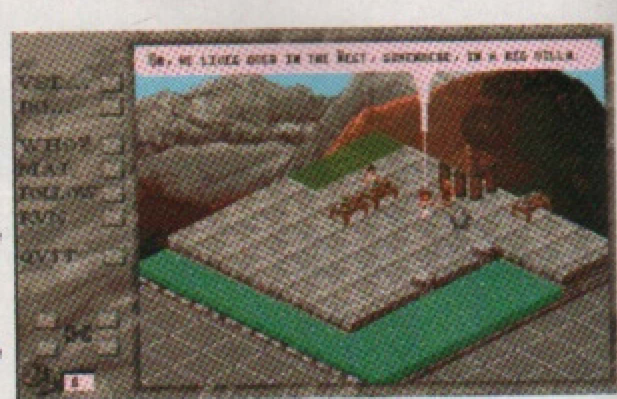


Hector is such a lowly fellow at the start of the game. Here he's receiving orders from his master. It's a good idea to follow these directions as they often provide hints on game progression.

ET TU BRUTUS

If he survives the eruption, Hector travels on to Rome. There he finds out about a plot to kill the Emperor, and being a good citizen he decides to grass-up the conspirators. The problem here is trying to get into the Emperor's heavily guarded palace to tell him. Again, the best way to proceed is to chat to the locals who will direct Hector to colourful taverns and people who might just know a way into the Emperor's retreat.

Should he succeed in this the game really gets going. The Emperor, who believes dying is just something that happens to the plebs, is hugely grateful to Hector and rewards him with the command of his armies in Britain. Once there he has the unenviable task of subduing the Britons. The key to dominating the isle is capturing the British War Standard, because they can't fight without it. The Romans also depend on their own standard, and if that falls to the Brits it's game over.



Nearly everyone has something to say – if Hector can stop them for long enough that is!

THE ROMANS ARE COMING

To begin with the Brits don't know that the Romans are coming, so Hector has a few minutes to make his plans and settle his men. The best way to proceed is by building a fort where the soldiers can rest and sharpen their pilums. It also pays to have popped into a temple in the previous stage for a bit of a chat with the gods. This gives the Roman armies a slightly unfair advantage in battle, as they now fight that little bit fiercer. Once the British chieftains catch on to the fact their country is being invaded, they rally their men and attack. The game now takes on a wargame element, where you control several divisions, planning their attacks and ordering them to build or rest between skirmishes. The outcome of a battle depends on several things: the strength and number of soldiers on each side, how well rested they are and if they're attacking from a fort.

If you survive the Brits and hand the title deeds of the country over to the Emperor, he gives you plenty of cash and your own villa right in the heart of Rome. From there on it's all a matter of exploiting the Roman political system, which isn't very different from today's for that matter. Hector simply has to lie, bribe, cheat and extort his way to the top. Because of his new-found status in the city, Hector can now buy slaves of his own (including female ones) and frequent such entertainments as the Circus Maximus, which is now willing to admit him as more than a contestant.

The tactics you learned in Britain soon come into play again as Hector is assigned to deal with an uprising in Egypt. Things aren't as easy as before though, the Egyptians are a damn sight more intelligent and devi-

ROMAN AROUND

Rome's history was a particularly violent one when compared to other civilisations. Romulus and Remus, the empire's founders as legend would have it, had a bit of a scrap in their later years which ended with Romulus clubbing his brother to death. As we all know one of the Roman's favourite pastimes was a family trip to the circus, where you could see Kirk Douglas lookalikes performing violent acts with swords. Naturally this has been included in the game, and can play quite an important part in convincing senators to vote for Hector in his election campaign.

ous than the British, and have an unnerving ability to sneak right past the most strategically placed guards. But success here guarantees entrance to the Senate back in Rome.

WHO CAN YOU TRUST?

Life near the top can be dangerous. Not everyone appreciates Hector's rise from serf to member of the Consul, and danger in the form of armed rivals lurks behind every door and corner. At this stage of the game the Emperor is still in power, so what's Hector to do? Wait for him to die, or perhaps speed things up a little?

Hector is a very easy character to control, although he's also very independent and occasionally gets his own ideas if you leave him too long, so he'll wander off to a temple or tavern to pass the time. To move him around just click on a specific area and he'll do his best to go there. This includes walking into a lava flow when I sent him to investigate some peculiar happenings at the edge of town in the first stage (his last words were 'sizzle ouch'). Communicating with other characters can be a little annoying though. Because everyone is busy leading their own lives, it's quite difficult holding their attention long enough to ask them about something. They can be stopped in their tracks by getting Hector to shout at them, which gives you time to select a topic to question them about. Once that's done they immediately scarper off, usually without leaving you time to ask a follow-up question.

WHAT A PRETTY PICTURE

The scenery graphics are ace throughout the game, although some of the character graphics are very puny. There are some really great pictures and animations that crop up when you complete a task, get into trouble or die, which further add to the game's presentation. The sound is a comparative let down though, but it's passable all the same.

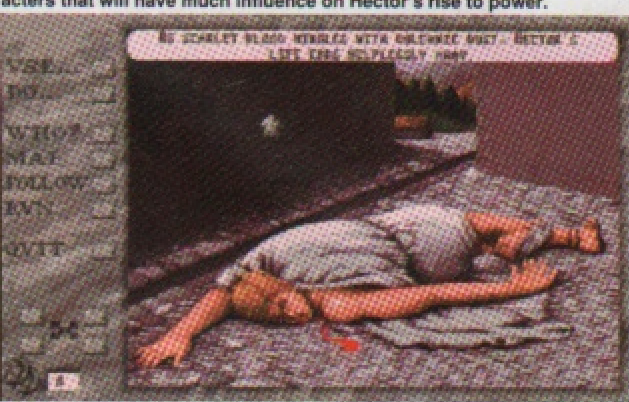
What makes this game really special is the humour. It's like a cross between Up Pompeii and Mel Brooks' History Of The World movie. Characters, such as the not-so-honourable senator Nintendus Gameboiis and Mafioso, the dodgy weapons vendor, crop up from time to time. There are some real corny comments in the dialogue between characters which are best swept under the mat and forgotten about. It's good fun to sit back occasionally and watch what's going on around you, such as when the volcano erupts and the entire region's population sprint past Hector screaming at him to get a move on.

Rome AD92 is a very novel little game. The plot is excellent and very well executed. One of the things that makes it so playable is the cast of characters. While there are many serfs and normal, boring Joes, there are also plenty of key people who have their own idiosyncrasies. Things are a bit busy at first, but the later stages are great fun. Check this one out if you're looking for something out of the ordinary.


The buildings in *Rome* are beautifully detailed and add a really smooth touch to the overall feel.


Clicking on the query icon can bring up information on important characters that will have much influence on Hector's rise to power.


This is the screen that you want to see at the end of the first stage. Hector sits back sipping juniper juice as his town burns.


That's what you get for looking in the wrong place at the wrong time. All you're left with is crispy fried hero.

ROBINIUM HOODIUS

This game might seem a little familiar to some of you, not surprising really because it uses the same engine as Millennium's previous isometric release *Robin Hood*. Games such as the *Lotus* series from Gremlin, Archer Maclean's forthcoming pool game, and some Ocean platform games also use this technique of 'borrowing' the guts from previous titles then undergoing some small cosmetic gameplay changes.


Use the map view to guide Hector to his next destination. Simply point, click and he will go.


Mount Vesuvius is getting a little hot under the collar. Hector better start lokking for another town to move to.


If Hector is not carefully controlled when the lava starts to flow he may panic and run off to pray at the local temple.


Speech bubbles play an important part in Rome. Not only do they show character interaction, but some of them are quite funny too.

buyers guide

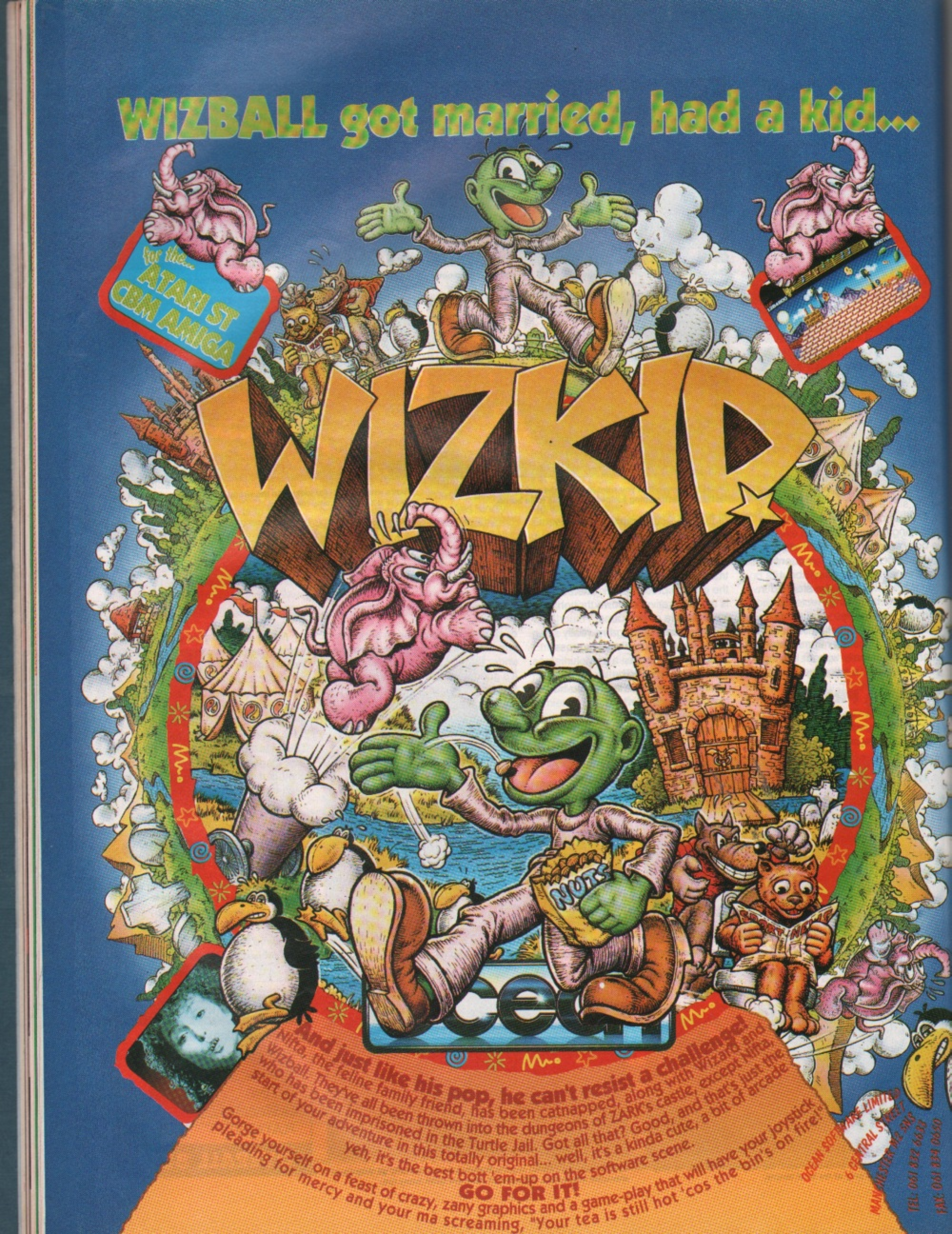
release date	November
genre:	Strategy
team:	In house
controls:	Mouse
numbers of disks:	3
number of players:	1
hard disk installable:	yes
memory:	1 meg

MILLENNIUM £29.99

"The later stages are great fun – check it out"

GRAPHICS	85%
SOUND	74%
LASTABILITY	82%
PLAYABILITY	85%

OVERALL 83%



WIZBALL got married, had a kid...
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And just like his pop, he can't resist a challenge!
Nifta, the feline family friend, has been catnapped, along with Wizard and Wizball. They've all been thrown into the dungeons of ZARK's castle, except Nifta, who has been imprisoned in the Turtle Jail. Got all that? Good, and that's just the start of your adventure in this totally original... well, it's a kinda cute, a bit of arcade yeh, it's the best bott 'em-up on the software scene.
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SHADOWORLDS



An Advanced Military Research Centre overrun by alien scum? It's time for Dan Slingsby to run the other way.



The control character is divided into five areas – two arms, two legs and the head. These can be clicked on with the mouse to issue instructions to the four characters. Each portrait has a health bar showing their current status and a box displaying any items currently held by the character.

IN THE SHADOW

Shadoworlds is essentially *Shadowlands* with a new scenario, a tweaked control system and a hell of a lot more firepower. This time around, you're in control of four intergalactic space cops sent to investigate the mysterious silence emanating from a Weapons Research Facility, the only one of its kind in the galaxy. To make matters worse, your men haven't got any weapons (they've been banned throughout the Federation, stupidly enough!), so you've got to scavenge for them once you reach the station.

For those not familiar with the first game, *Shadoworlds* is an pseudo-RPG with some arcade-style gameplay thrown in for good measure. Everything is mouse-driven throughout, with the inventory screen merely a mouse click away. Some lessons have obviously been learnt from the first game and everything is a lot more straightforward. The on-screen sprites have been cleaned up and are more distinctive than before. The spells of the first one have been replaced by an awesome assortment of weapons, with 12 different combinations possible. Each one comes in two parts and combining different elements will result in different effects. For example, a flamethrower will either spew its deadly load in a continuous burst or fire concentrated blasts around the screen depending on which attachment is used. How well you can actually use such armaments depends not only on your dexterity with the mouse, but also on each character's tech level which improves as the game progresses.

TRICKS AND TRAPS

The same combination of pressure pads and light-activated doorways are on offer, as well as a variety of levers and pulleys. Even the oracle of the first game makes a reappearance, this time dressed up as an on-board computer system which, when activated, will give vital clues as to how to progress. The most notable improvement is in the control system – in the previous game there were just far too many needless mouse clicks to get your characters to do anything. Here, there's just one action portrait to control all four men. Another improvement is the speed of the game – at times it looks as if your men are practising the 100 metre sprint. Everything is much more action-orientated, too, with an incredible number of alien nasties to blow away.

Merely switching the action from the original's dungeons and temples to the corridors of a space station isn't a massive leap in the imagination, though. Admittedly, you do get to transport down to three different planet surfaces for a bit of exploration, but the rest of the game involves trudging through the endless corridors of the space station. It all becomes a bit samey after a while. The game's puzzle elements have been cut down, but there are still plenty included. The new space helmets worn by your intergalactic troops can direct light in a 360° arc so, predictably, many of the puzzles they encounter are light based.

Each character has a limited range of view. For example, it's not possible to fire a weapon at a far away target.



Each character has two lamps built into their space helmet. To power these lamps, you must first find some batteries.

UNDER ORDERS

***Shadowlands* features a multitasking control system. This allows the player to issue an instruction to more than one character at the same time, e.g. it's possible to have one character firing a weapon at a creature, another opening a door, a third collecting an item, whilst the fourth is resting – all at the same time. Just issue the series of instructions to the characters and each will execute their own commands.**

X-RAY VISION

The actual space station looks a bit like the one in Audiogenic's *Wreckers*, with screen after screen of tunnels and subways. If you suffer from claustrophobia, then this certainly won't help. Fortunately, the game's developers, Teque, have seen fit to do away with the crude line-based cutaway walls of *Shadowlands* and replaced them with a wire-mesh effect which is much less confusing and lets you see what's going on when one of your characters moves behind a wall.

There are a lot of neat touches throughout the game. Some of the alien beasts are very detailed and the water and apples of the first game have been replaced with fluid bags which dispense nutrients through an intravenous drip. The in-game music is suitably eerie and atmospheric and the variety of pick-ups and equipment keep things from getting dull. There's always something new to discover or collect.

Overall, I was highly impressed with *Shadoworlds*. It's got more of an arcade-bias then the first game and the action is relentless at times. Fans of the first game won't be disappointed with this sequel and those that were put off by the plodding style and over-emphasis on puzzles of the original should definitely give *Shadoworlds* a look. They might just be pleasantly surprised.

buyers guide

release date:	November
genre:	RPG
team:	Teque
controls:	Mouse
number of disks	2
number of players:	1
memory:	1Mb

KRISALIS £25.99

'Action-packed RPG with a definite arcade bias'

GRAPHICS	85%
SOUND	83%
LASTABILITY	84%
PLAYABILITY	88%

OVERALL 85%



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The computer is not averse to some cheating at times. Just when you think you've polished off all the enemy, reinforcements are magically flown in and you nearly always get caught as you're about to make your escape..



Once you've had your go, the computer takes over and moves its men. Each has a health rating as well as a set number of moves. To give some indication of exactly what's happening, pictures are used which light up each time a specific action is carried out.

SABRE TEAM

Tony Dillon has always enjoyed wearing black, so what better game to review than Krisalis' new SAS strategic title...

HARD CONTROL

You are in charge of one of the hardest, yet the most secretive squads in the world – the Sabre team. Other armies lead public attacks. Even the main part of the SAS end up on the news from time to time. Not you. No-one knows you even exist, let alone who you are. That is why when the going gets tough, they send you in.

Sabre Team is a low-level strategy played over five scenarios. In each, you take four of your eight team members, and guide them through the mission. Like most wargames, it is played out in turns, with you moving, firing, etc., followed by the computer doing similar activities, rather like *Space Crusade*.

Once you have chosen your four soldiers, selecting them on the basis of varying statistics such as strength, health, marksmanship and reaction time, you move into the first scenario. Unlike most games of this type, you can't choose which scenario to play, which adds a nice progressive touch. Once you've worked your way through the first level (rescuing P.O.W.s from a jungle camp), you can move onto some of the other offensives, which include entering an embassy to destroy terrorists and wiping out some hijackers of an ocean liner.



Re-live the Iranian London embassy seige of 1982! One of the levels in *Sabre Team* is a thinly-disguised re-enactment of this exact same event.

'AMMO' MENT, PLEASE?

Before you can really start doing some damage, you have to get your team tooled up. The inventory for each player in turn is displayed, alongside the team's weapon inventory. There are 12 different offensive weapons to choose from, including automatic and semi-automatic rifles, two cans of CS gas, and stocks of each are limited. All weapons make varying amounts of noise when fired, and this is something worth taking into account if you want to move without attracting too much attention. It's worth bringing a fair bit of ammunition with you as well, but not so much as to slow you down. See, the game's getting strategic already.

At the start of each turn, each player has a full quota of 'Action points'. This is his lifeblood, and governs the amount of things he can do. Walking forward costs four points, for example, whereas firing a carefully aimed shot costs six.

The game is controlled by a small bank of icons at the bottom of the screen which contain all the options you could need, from picking up and dropping objects, to priming grenades, reloading weapons and even going into stealth mode, which means that each movement is a lot quieter, but costs more points. In the bottom right corner is your compass. This wonderful gadget not only controls your movements (clicking on a direction moves the current player that way), but also tells you in which direction you have heard someone's movement or even seen them, should they be off-screen. Once all your movements are complete, the computer covers the screen and moves its own characters about. If none of your players have a direct view of a computer player, then you won't see it move.

The game is played out over some huge maps, displayed as scrolling isometric grids, and they do look good. The attention to detail is stunning, right down to the way the soldiers raise their rifles before firing.

YEARS OLD

I have always enjoyed this sort of game, from the day that *Rebelstar Raiders* was released on the Spectrum, and this is one of the best yet. The computer puts up a realistic fight, and this creates just enough suspense for you to hold your breath every time an enemy soldier raises their weapon. Good stuff.

NOISY ATMOSPHERE

Unlike most wargames, sound plays a very large part in *Sabre Team*. Firing a weapon draws unwanted attention your way, and most enemy soldiers will shout for back-up as soon as they see you. All these noises are gloriously relayed through your TV, and it really does work. I lost count of the number of times I sat there swearing to myself as I worked a stealthy dance through some maze-like area of the level, getting ready to attack a particular area from behind, only to have some git step out of nowhere and warn everyone else of my presence. Naturally, he didn't live long enough to do it again.

buyers guide

release date	October 1992
genre:	Strategy
team:	Teque
controls:	Mouse
numbers of disks:	2
number of players:	1
hard disk installable:	No
memory:	1Mb

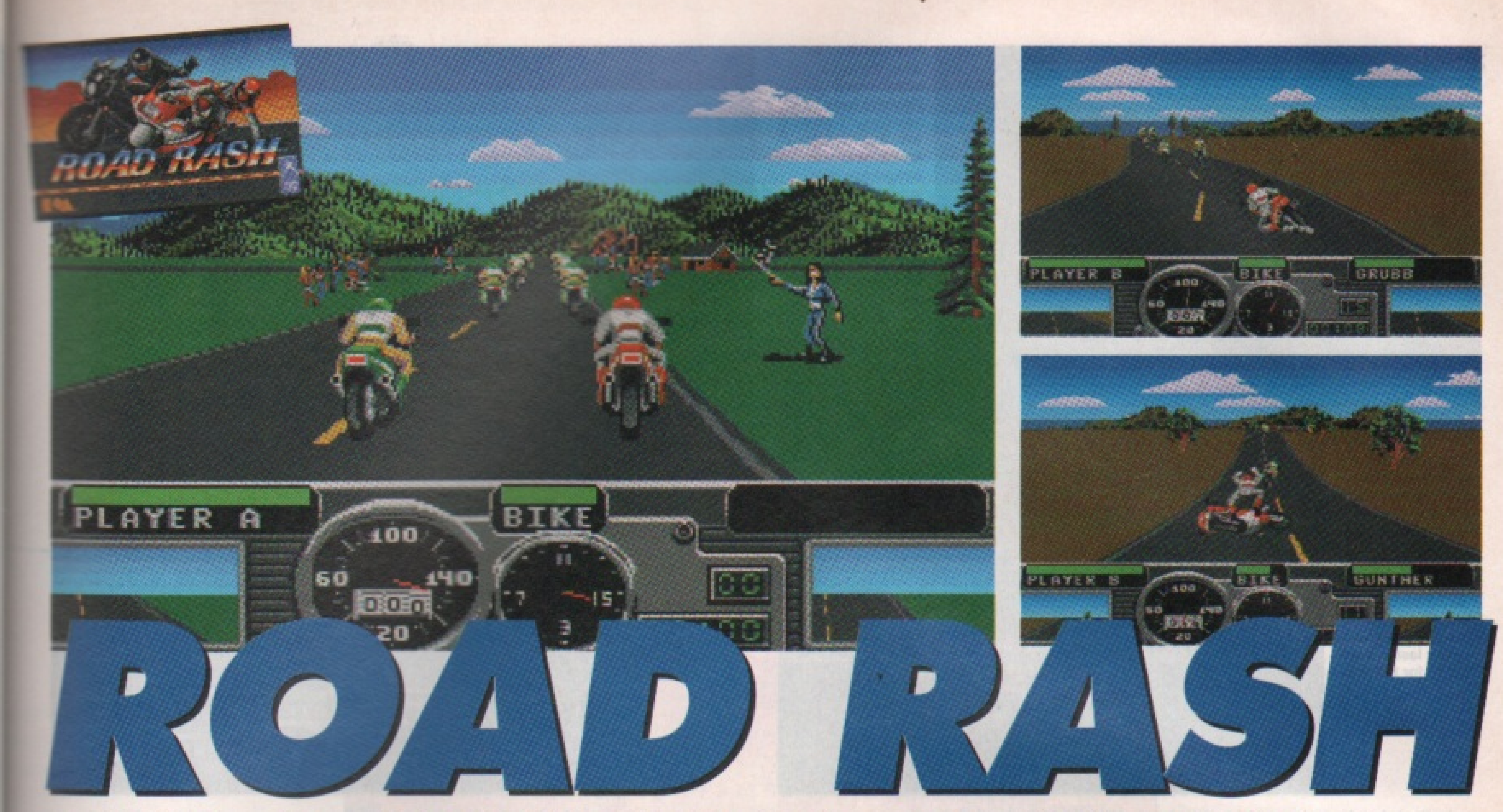
KRISALIS £25.99

"Involving strategic title, with superb graphics"

GRAPHICS	89%
SOUND	86%
LASTABILITY	81%
PLAYABILITY	80%

OVERALL 83%


Virgin
GAMES



ROAD RASH

Following on from *John Madden*, Electronic Arts are continuing with their Megadrive to Amiga conversions with their smash-hit bike-race game, *Road Rash*.

PUNCH HIS LIGHTS OUT

Whereas most motorcycle games are played in the spirit of sportsmanship on nice safe tracks, this game gets down and dirty on the back roads of the USA as the competitors do whatever they can to win. No holds are barred as the competitors punch, kick and barge their way to the finish lines, and the glory of being the fastest in the world.

Rather than have the usual bunch of nebulas riders, EA have added a cast of characters as your opponents. They're on hand to give you friendly advice, or gossip, before each race. For instance, one might tell you who's going to be armed in the next race, or who they think you should avoid. Sometimes they just come out with really sarcastic comments about your previous races, which gives you a good excuse to run them off the road.

Should you alienate any of them by, for instance, ramming them off the road, they won't be so friendly next time you meet. Some, like Helldog, aren't concerned with the happenings of the other riders, so there's no point in being friendly, just cause him as many problems as possible. A downed opponent is practically out of the race as it takes quite a while for them to remount and accelerate to full speed. There's one rider in particular, Viper, who regularly takes first place. It pays to flatten this guy as he'll overtake you at the earliest opportunity.





TOUR AMERICA

The game is divided into a number of increasingly difficult stages, which are in turn separated into five races. They take place by beaches, through desert country and woodlands, which is reflected in the change of terrain. Each course is between four and six miles long. An odometer in the centre of the speedometer shows how much distance you've covered, which is handy for deciding when to make a last minute dash to the line. The finish is always situated in a small town, where there's a crowd of Road Rash groupies on hand to greet the winners. After that you're told how much money you've won, who finished in the top three and you're given a chance to buy a new bike.

Because one of the keys to winning the game is beating your opponents in the literal sense, there are a few extra features on the screen display. By the tachometer is your stamina bar and opposite that is your nearest opponents. When a rider is hit their bar decreases – if it goes all the way down they're stunned and fall off their bike. They do recover quickly, though, and come back looking for revenge, so it's best to make sure a rider goes down when you hit them.

The roads themselves are loaded with hazards. Bends and hills conceal other vehicles, and taking a hill at speed will leave you hanging in mid-air. There are also plenty of road-side obstacles such as houses, trees and even cows which prevent you from cutting corners and overtaking on the verges.

FALL GUY

A difficult opponent will do their best not to let you pass. In times like these you have to resort to violence. The easiest way is to pull alongside another bike and tap the fire button, which will unleash a punch or a kick. For a better effect, accelerate then pull sideways into them. This usually results in the victim being forced off the road and off their bike. Some of the participants have come prepared with clubs. Being hit with one will dismount you immediately, so keep an eye out for them. When someone raises a club at you, hit fire and try to disarm them. If it works you get the club which lets you make mincemeat out of the other racers.

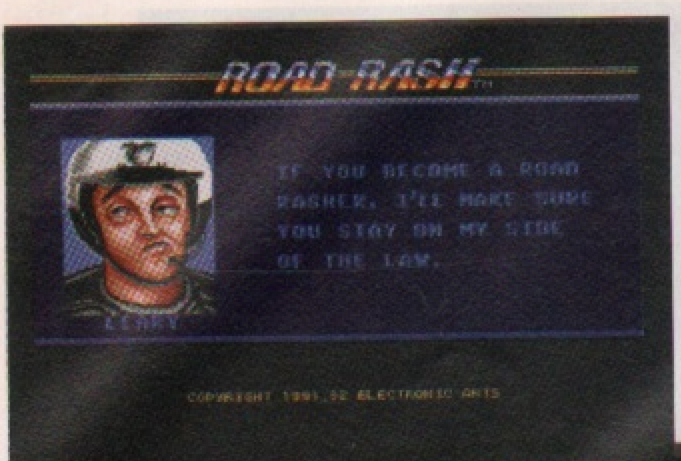
Should you come off your bike as the result of a blow or hitting a road-side object, you then control the rider who has to be guided back to his fallen bike. The other riders aren't very sympathetic to dismounted racers and will often go out of their way to run them over. This really does slow you down as it tends to bounce you further away from your bike. Getting hit by an on-coming car has the additional effect of stunning your rider, so you need to be really careful on busy roads.

As well as looking after yourself, you need to take good care of your bike. A damage meter in the centre of the dashboard shows just what condition it's in. If it takes a pounding the gauge goes down. If it empties completely you're going to be sitting on so much scrap metal. If that's the case you've got a long walk to the finish line, and a very expensive repair bill, which will mean game over if you don't have the cash to cover it.

There are a great many dirty tricks you can use. Although a bike isn't as wide as a car, you can still use your rear-view mirror to pin-point any opponent who's gaining and steer into their path. Another pleasant trick is to bump someone into the path of an on-coming vehicle. It's guaranteed to prevent them catching up with you.

IT'S THE ROZZERS

The local police don't take kindly to this kind of high-speed racing going



Pay attention to what the more experienced Rashers have to say. They'll tell you who has the club on the next race and whose bike you should avoid crashing into. The police also chip in with a few comments. But, who cares what they say?



Crossroads mean traffic heading across your path. They come so fast that it's difficult to slow down and avoid any civilian traffic. Your best bet is to open the throttle, close your eyes, and steam across at maximum speed.



The five levels on each stage can be raced in any order. There's no advantage to this, unless you're bored by a particular type of scenery. It's worth remembering how long the course is, so you can judge your last-minute sprint for the line.



You've made it to first place, although Viper came very close to pipping you at the close. The winners prize in this instance is $750, which should just be enough to cover repairs to a badly abused bike.

on in their backyards, and turn up in the hope of bagging themselves a rider. Like the racers, the police have individual characteristics. O'Leary, for instance, is a rookie who drives real slow and is easy to get past, while O'Shea is an ex-Road Rasher who'll unleash his night-stick at the first opportunity. Getting caught by any cop means race over. The easiest way to avoid a run-in with the law is to speed on past them, alternatively you can try and ram them off the road. This is tricky as they ride big, heavy bikes which are quite resiliant to an impact from a light-weight Japanese speed machine. The only way they can catch you is if you pull level with them at the same speed. Getting caught entails an instant jail sentence and the end of your career as a *Road Rash* demon.

IN THE BANK

Apart from the glory aspect of winning a race, there's also the financial reward. Although you earn a decent amount if you finish first, second or third, pranging your bike will eat into this as repairs have to made at the end of every round. In addition, it also pays to be careful and save your cash, as there are better bikes you have to buy to compete in the later races.

As it takes a long time to build up a significant amount of winnings there's a password continue system which lets you carry on exactly as you were. In addition, any races where you performed dismally can be re-run. The only way you can complete a level is by finishing at least fourth in all five races, which isn't too difficult to begin with, but soon becomes tough on the later levels. As the game progresses and the competition becomes tougher, most riders resort to violence to give themselves a helping hand to the finish line.

ROAD RASH 2

Road Rash is a fun alternative to normal race games. The graphics are good throughout and there are some really nice touches, such as cross-roads which come complete with traffic. There are also plenty of hills which hide on-coming cars, so it pays to watch what the rider in front is doing.

The only criticism I can level at *Road Rash* is that it's a little slow. While immensely playable, it doesn't deliver the feeling of charging down a road at 120mph. As a fan of the Megadrive version (which is already well over a year old) I was hoping Electronic Arts would do a bit more with this. *Road Rash 2* on the Megadrive is nearing completion, and has such extra features as more weapons, including a vicious chain, improved bikes and more characters. It would have been nice to see some of these features included, or perhaps a few original ideas, rather than this just being a straight conversion. That said it's still very playable and nicely violent. Not the best race game available, but still a nice change from the usual sporting lot.

MEGADRIVE VS AMIGA

When placed head-to-head, there's very little between the Megadrive and Amiga versions of *Road Rash*. The only noticeable feature is that the Megadrive game is slightly faster, otherwise it's fair to say they're identical.

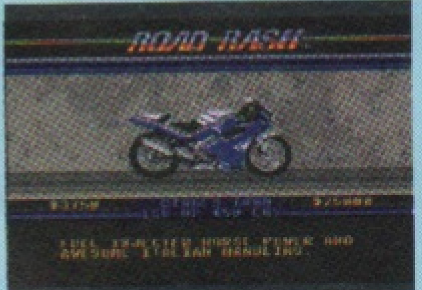
MOTORBIKIN'

There are several fictional high-performance bikes in the game. Each has its own characteristics. While the bike you start with is good for the first few races, you're going to need a Japanese super rocket to stand a chance in the later races.

BANZAI 750

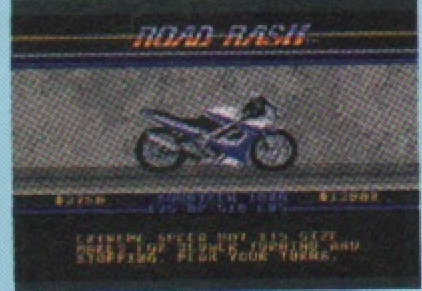
Noticeably faster than the Shurikan. What it gains in speed it loses in road handling, you'll have to take corners early and very carefully.

DIABLO 1000



This monster bike is the best in the game. It's fast, handles well and has awesome acceleration. It also has a huge price-tag.

SHURIKAN 1000



Fast and very dangerous. This bike can pull massive speeds, but it steers like a brick, so be prepared for several accidents or pile-ups.

buyers guide

release date	December 1992
genre:	Arcade
team:	in house
controls:	joystick
numbers of disks:	2
number of players:	1
hard disk installable:	no
memory:	1 Mb

ELECTRONIC ARTS £25.99

"Violent fun. Could do with being a little faster"

GRAPHICS	80%
SOUND	82%
LASTABILITY	84%
PLAYABILITY	80%

OVERALL 81%

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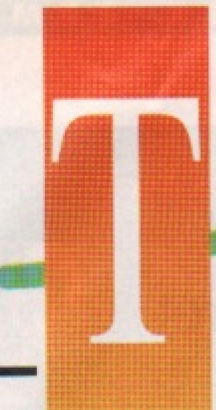
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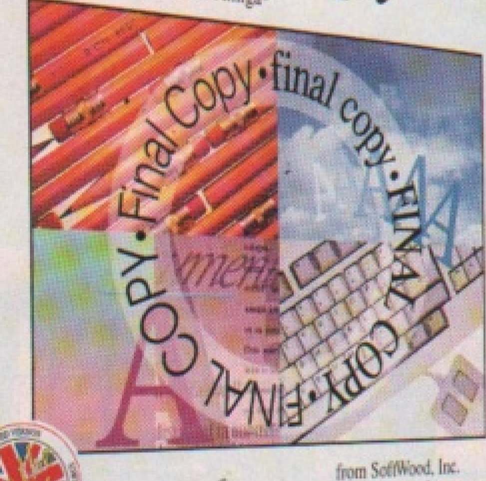
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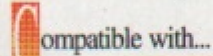
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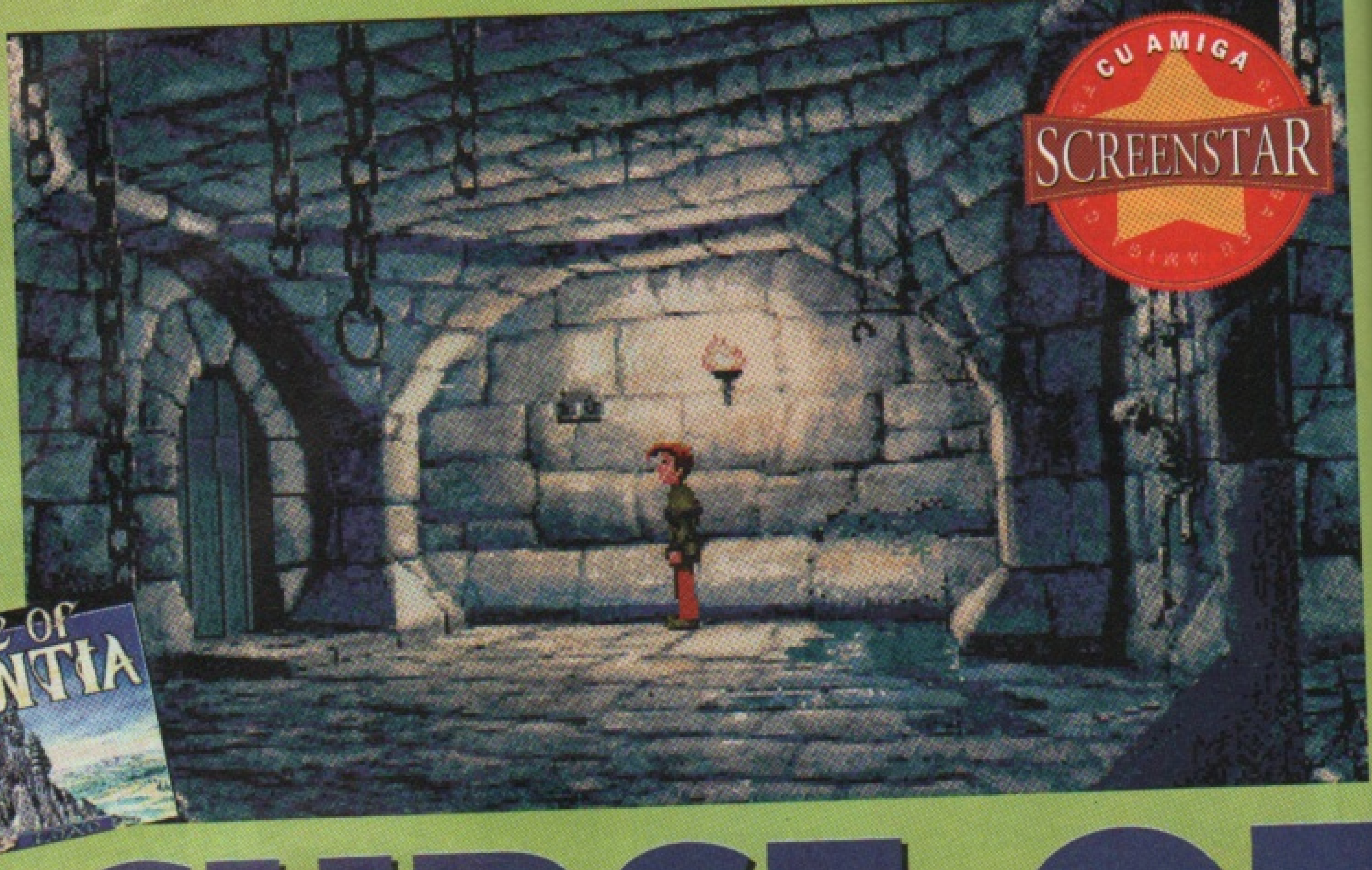
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Getting thrown into damp, dingy dungeons is an occupational hazard for adventurers, but at least this cell has been beautifully drawn. You'll have lots of time to examine the lovely artwork before you finally discover a chink in the brickwork which will give you a glimpse of freedom.



CURSE OF

Braving wicked witches and shark infested waters Tony Gill plunges into a new graphic adventure.

BASEBALL IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH

In the now forgotten land of Enchantia, evil deeds are committed without cause. For years a coven of evil witches ruled the land, and the people prayed for the day when they could live in peace. After what seemed like forever, things finally changed – they got worse! One witch who was more evil than the rest (and believe me that took some doing), found a spell which could give her constant youth. The main ingredient was a live, male child. Are you getting the picture? The evil witch persuaded two of her less intelligent friends to visit medieval earth, on the promise that they would have great fun creating destruction and mayhem there, but in fact she intended to use their power to open a portal through which she could catch a boy. When the two fools arrived in the world of men, the evil witch sent a 'Disperse and Claim' spell through the portal which hit her exhausted dupes, consuming their souls and dispersing their essence over the fields in which they stood. A little bit like a muck-spreader I suppose.

In the few years that passed in Enchantia, many hundreds passed in the world of men. Around the enchanted field villages sprung up, to be replaced in their turn by small towns. Finally a great city was built and its streets and houses spread into the countryside. But nothing was ever built on that mysterious field, for down the years strange tales were told of the odd happenings which had taken place there. Instead a wall was thrown around the green mantle and only the children who were too young or too stupid went to play games and fight mock battles in its cool bosom.

It was a warm day, with a bright, blue sky. The kind of day that makes fathers decide to wash the car. The kind of weather that makes mothers drag their sons out of the comfort and safety of their bedrooms saying silly things like, 'Stop wasting your time playing with computers, and get out into the fresh air and get some exercise.' And so, instead of spending his day playing mind-improving games with his Amiga, Brad found himself heading for the nearby field to play baseball. If only he knew that across the void of time and space, other eyes were watching the park. Cold, heartless eyes that were waiting for the moment to strike. The ball left the pitcher's hand, Brad raised the bat, then in the twinkling of an eye he was gone! Once the smoke and sparkling fairy dust had left his eyes, the boy found himself hanging by his ankles in a dank dungeon cell.

INSPIRATIONS

The land of Enchantia seems to have a fair sprinkling of ideas from many tales, and going to see the wizard who can get you home is the least of them. There is also the cross-roads where the lost hero takes advice from talking signposts which brings the scarecrow to mind.

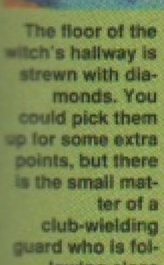
Take a look in the fancy dress shop called 'Ben's Tailors' where the magical proprietor will sell you a costume which will take you off on another quest. Did you watch Mr. Ben the children's TV series? Going through the door in the back of the changing room to a land of snow and ice, complete with an ice palace, brings back memories of The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe, with just a spoonful of the Snow Queen from Hans Christian Anderson. Seems like all all your yesterdays are buried here in the Land of Enchantia. Take a peak and see if you can spot some buried inspiration for yourself.



Emerging from your stroll across the sea bed where you had lots of 'fun' fighting sharks and electric eels, you are now faced with a solid rock wall. You know there has just got to be a secret switch around here, but where is it?



Cartoon monsters are to be found throughout the land of Enchantia, and here in the underground caves, mud monsters pop up and skid along the corridors just when you least expect it.



The floor of the witch's hallway is strewn with diamonds. You could pick them up for some extra points, but there is the small matter of a club-wielding guard who is following close behind.



Having battled your way through miles of rocky caves and faced innumerable dangers you'd think that at least you'd be able to buy a drink in the local tavern, but this hard-nosed guy won't let you get the sniff of the booze.



ENCHANTIA

FOLLOW THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD

The land of Enchantia is full of talking animals, magic and monsters – and all of this is ruled by the evil witch (it's just not Brads day is it!). Heaven only knows how he is going to get home, but unless he wants to become the major ingredient in the witch's next spell, you had better help him find a way out of the dungeon fast. Once you have escaped the castle (which is easier said than done), you'll find that your long road to freedom resembles an episode from Dorothy's adventures in the Land of Oz. This is a world of magic and mystery, where animals dress in human clothes, and you can walk along the sea-bed with a goldfish bowl on your head.

If you successfully cross the ocean, find your way through a subterranean maze and eventually stumble on the nearby 'Munchkin-like' town, you can be sure that your troubles are just about to begin. A visit to the local fortune teller, who just happens to be a seal called Sally the 'See-All', will give you the notion that you really should look up the local magician. (I mean visit him of course.).

Here you'll be offered two quests, which, if completed successfully, will get you a first class ticket home. Having no other option but to agree you'll be transported to the edge of the world and left to fend for yourself on the crumbling ledge of a impossibly high clifftop. Your further adventures will take you on a whirlwind tour of a volcanic island, the Marie Celeste, an Ice Palace, a graveyard filled with zombies and vampires, and finally to the awful confrontation with the witch of Enchantia in her castle.

This game resembles the *Kings Quest* adventures from Sierra-On-Line, with its magical storyline and easy 'point and click' menu selection. Mercifully it does not resemble its Sierra counterpart when it comes to speed, for it is much faster and does not have a five minute intermission each time you move to the next screen. It is fashionable nowadays to include small arcade action sequences in adventures, and in this *Enchantia* is no exception. Controlling your alter-ego with the mouse is a bit clumsy, however these sequences are fairly easy to complete and whatever happens you won't be killed and forced to reload. Instead the game simply delays you for a short while until you find a way to overcome the problem or you accept the loss of a few points.

A special mention should be made of the game's artwork as it is superb, and compares favorably with the best in the business. The animation sequences are very well done and would do justice to a movie cartoon. The sound also needs a special mention as a great number of digitized effects have been included, which brings lots of fun and atmosphere to the story.

PROBLEMS WITH PROBLEMS

Setting the difficulty level of the puzzles in any adventure is an awkward problem, and when the game involves a magical element things are even harder, as the problems can have a solution which defies logic. In *Enchantia* the majority of the puzzles are fairly easy and even a newcomer to the genre will eventually be successful, but there are a number of areas where logic appears to have been thrown out of the window. At times like these you will simply have to work through all the actions which are possible from the menu and trust to luck. At least there is an on-screen icon which gives a 'thumbs up' symbol when you do something which is on the right track and a 'thumbs down' when you are wasting your time.

There is a save game facility, but in the version supplied there was no hard disk installation option. Hard disk installation is a facility which all new games should now consider as standard.

This is a classy game whic is much better than *Lure of the Temptress*, which it could be compared with. For a start it is much bigger and contains dozens of different locations. The quest will also take a good deal longer to complete, which makes it an even better buy. I think some of the puzzles are a bit illogical, but computer gamers are ingenious folk, so I'll defer judgement on that point. The further into the game you get the more luxurious it becomes. Around each bend the graphics get better and better. You may get frustrated, but you'll also get your money's worth if you persevere.

buyers guide

release date	Out Now
genre:	Adventure
team:	Core Design
controls:	mouse/joystick
numbers of disks:	4
number of players:	1
hard disk installable:	No
memory:	1 Mb

CORE DESIGN £34.99

" A beautifully drawn world of magic and adventure. "

GRAPHICS	95%
SOUND	85%
LASTABILITY	80%
PLAYABILITY	85%

OVERALL 89%



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PINBALL fantasies

Dan Slingsby goes flippin' crazy over 21st Century's follow up to Pinball Dreams.


Speed Devils is particularly lacking in imagination or ideas.

REPLAY

21st Century had a bit of a surprise hit on their hands when they released *Pinball Dreams* earlier this year. The pinball simulator really took off and stayed in the charts for ages. Now the Swedish programming team behind the game, Digital Illusion, are back with another four computer pinball tables for your delectation and delight.

Each one revolves around a particular theme. Partyland uses a theme park as the basis for its design while Billion Dollar Game Show has a cheesy smiling host adorning the table with the chance to win TVs, holidays and cars by hitting the right lights. Speed Devils is based on motor cars, and Stones & Bones is a spooky table with all manner of ghosts and skulls adorning the backdrop.

Everything is controlled via the keyboard, with the shift keys activating the flippers and the down arrow shooting the ball onto the table. Unfortunately, the game suffers from exactly the same problem as its forebearer, namely that four tables isn't nearly enough for your money. Of the four tables on offer with *Pinball Fantasies*, only Partyland lived up to its potential, the other three being incredibly boring and unrewarding to play. And that's not exactly good value for money when you consider 21st Century are putting it on sale for £29.99.

PAAAAARTY

Things began well enough. Partyland is a garish table crammed with bumpers, lights, bonus combinations and ball-carriers. The fun park theme is effective with fruit machines, a duck shoot, skyride and demon's mouth making up part of the display, reinforced by the fairground sounds and jolly music. Unfortunately, none of the other tables are as good. Speed Devils showed an utter lack of imagination in table layout and design. Too few rewards and a huge empty table soon made me tire of this one. Moving on, Billion Dollar Game Show had an incredibly grating audience sample, but was sadly lacking in imagination. Why not samples of Leslie Crowther shouting 'Come on down' or even the simpering Bob Monkhouse? Just a little more thought could have saved this one from disaster. The last table, Stones and Bones did have some brilliant graphics depicting all manner of ghouls and ghosts and there were excellent samples of creaking doors, church bells and manic laughter, but again, the layout was crap and there was just too little to do.

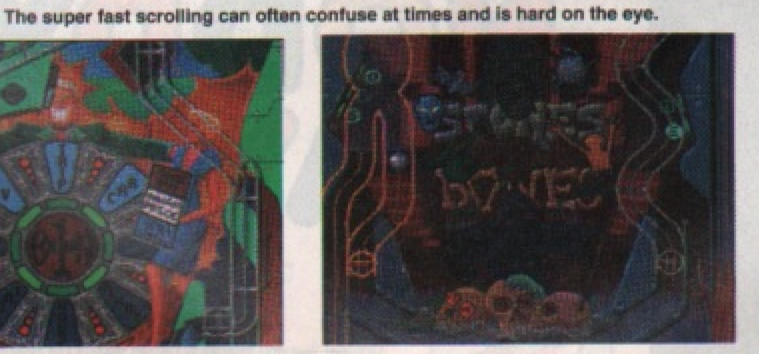

SUPER FAST

What bugged me even more, though, was the scrolling. Each table takes up roughly two-and-a-half screens and the action automatically centres on the ball as it whizzes about the screen. At times, things are reduced to a blur and its very hard on the eye. Surely it would have been a better idea to restrict each table to only one screen so that all the action could be viewed at once? Also, although eight players can take part, only the current player's score is displayed, so it's difficult to keep track of who's winning.

I don't mean to rubbish the game entirely, as it has been slickly put together and some of the samples are very good, but a little more variety and thought could have made this a much better game than it actually is. If you liked the first game, you'll like this, but make sure you play before you buy.



Partyland is definitely the best table on offer – but then there's very little competition.


The super fast scrolling can often confuse at times and is hard on the eye.


WHATS NEW

The new tables include multi-flippers (well, three!), a dot matrix score panel which continually flashes messages and come-ons, and a JACKPOT accumulator which is built up by all participating players during a game. At the end of each game, one digit of your score is shown. Random numbers are then flashed across the panel and one will be selected. If your number matches the random number, you're awarded an extra ball and play continues from where you left off. It's also possible to save the high-scores for each table to disk, so that when you next load up, your previous high-score will be there for all to see.

buyers guide

release date	October
genre:	Pinball sim
team:	Digital Illusions
controls:	Keyboard
numbers of disks:	3
number of players:	1-8
hard disk installable:	No
memory:	512k

21st CENTURY ENTERAINMENT £29.99

"Pinball simulator that's lacking in excitement"

GRAPHICS	88%
SOUND	70%
LASTABILITY	64%
PLAYABILITY	58%

OVERALL 65%

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IBM PC screen shots

ASSASSIN

CU AMIGA SCREENSTAR

Following the success of their last game, *Project X*, Team 17 have decided to keep very much with an arcade theme. Mark Patterson aims his pen in their direction...



WOULD-BE CONSOLE

Like many Amiga games nowadays, *Assassin* has borrowed several elements usually found in console games. There are three skill levels, starting at Rookie, where the enemies are more laid-back but you can only play two levels. The next level is Arcade where everything comes at you a lot faster, followed by Ultimate, which has ultra-hard enemies and minimal time limits. If that's not enough for you, the number of lives you start with can be set from one to five.

An extremely useful feature that first appeared in console platform games allows you to view what's residing just off the screen either below or above you. This is handy as you're often required to jump through gaps and off platforms where you wouldn't otherwise be able to see what was coming next.

This hunk of slime takes a hell of a pounding before it dies. Save the mega-weapons until you reach it. The homing-missiles are very effective. If all else fails, jump and shoot it in the head.

The final hurdle at the end of level one isn't very difficult to beat. Hold on to your mega-weapons and use the boomerangs instead.

Use your homing missiles to blast this end of level boss. He spends most of his time in mid-air launching salvos of missiles at you.

LOOKS CAN KILL

Assassin can be described in one word – *Strider*-esque. The similarity between the two games is noticeable right from the start. The main character looks similar to the one in *Strider*, he can also run real fast, hang off walls and ceilings and somersault through the air. Don't get me wrong though, although this game bears many similarities to *Strider*, it's actually a lot better.

The plot, or what there is of it, is the usual arcade excuse to go and kick some mad-man's behind. This time the villain is called Midan, and he's been targetted for assassination by the Allied Security forces as he has practically made himself the financial ruler of the world. Naturally, he's not going to go down without a fight, so he's had five gigantic, heavily defended levels put between him and the assassin, populated with all sorts of robots, tricks and traps.

The assassin is a very agile character indeed. First off, he can give many enemies the slip by employing his super-fast running abilities. He can somersault onto platforms, climb and swing on background items, in addition to that he can also hang onto ceilings in true Spiderman style.

BOOMERANG BOY

Naturally, all these abilities don't mean squat to the enemy, who'll keep shooting regardless of acrobatics. So to defend himself the assassin is armed with a boomerang. We're not talking a Rolf Harris novelty product here, this boomerang is capable of taking apart armoured robots. It can be powered-up to make it faster, more damaging and so that it travels further when thrown.

In addition to the boomerang power-ups there are a number of mega-weapons to collect. These beauties range from heat seeking missiles, through proximity mines to a gigantic flame weapon. When found, these are acitivated by holding down the fire button for a few seconds, then releasing.

The end room of each level contains a rather large boss, who naturally makes what you've just been through look like child's play. It's worth saving your mega-weapons for these sections, as the bosses each have a number of special attacks, which makes them very difficult to beat if you don't know what order they're coming in.

One of the most striking features about *Assassin* is its size. There are over 1500 screens spread across the five levels, so the onus is as much on exploration as in causing chaos. To help you out there's a really excellent collectable item which speaks the direction you've got to go in.

LEGLESS CHIMPS

Throughout the game the sprites have the same compact detailed look to them. Each level has its own set of bad guys, the best, to my mind, appearing in the genetic research lab where you're assailed by legless chimpanzees. Despite nice touches like these, the graphics are relatively simple throughout, on the other hand this does prevent the game from slowing down and leaves enough memory for the gigantic maps.

If your Amiga is connected to a stereo you're in for a real treat with this game. The sound effects are fantastic. Apart from the explosions, there are effects such as the wind blowing through the caverns, and the squelching foot-falls of the assassin as he runs across living platforms.

Assassin is another sure-fire winner from Team 17, I wouldn't be surprised to see it take the Christmas number one slot. It deserves to.

buyers guide

release date	October
genre:	Platform
team:	Team 17/Psionic Systems
controls:	Joystick
numbers of disks:	2
number of players:	1
hard disk installable:	yes
memory:	1 Mb only

TEAM 17 £25.99

"An excellent action-packed arcade romp"

GRAPHICS	87%
SOUND	82%
LASTABILITY	92%
PLAYABILITY	93%

OVERALL 89%

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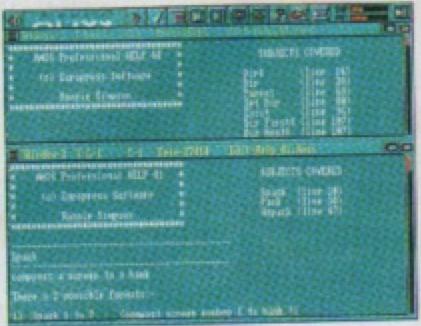
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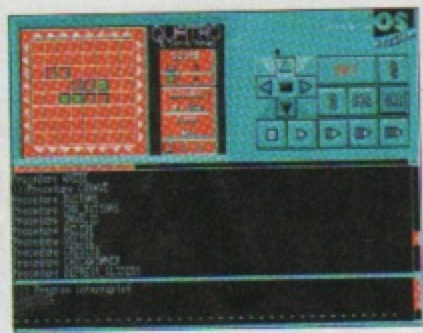
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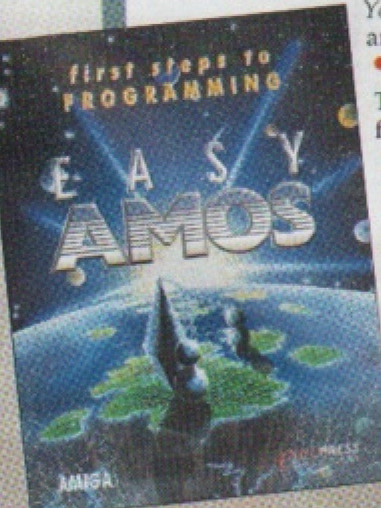
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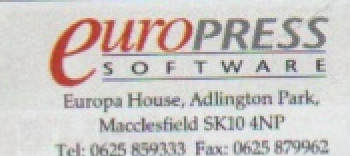
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the TROLL'S HEAD and ADVENTURE HELPLINE

Adventuring can be a lonely occupation. The Troll's Head is the place for all adventurers to gather and listen to the latest gossip or find a solution from the Shrine of Knowledge. Do come in...

RULES OF THE HOUSE

No spell-casting or devil-raising allowed in the bar.

No biting, kicking or spitting.

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Don't kick the Bard, he's doing his best.

NOTE:- We do 'NOT' sell Quiche!!

By Order of:- The Inn Keeper.

CLOSE THE DOOR AFTER YOU

Welcome weary traveller to the Troll's Head Inn. Feeling tired and need a place to lay your bloodied head? Down on your luck and seeking a new quest? Or are you seeking a nugget of wisdom which will help you complete that old quest which is driving you nuts? Either way you've found just the place to rest-up and bind your wounds for an hour or two. Here you can drink a tankard of ale at the bar and listen to the rumours of all that's happening in the world of Role Playing Games and Adventures. You can peruse the Heroes Wanted board which gives details of the newest and most exciting quests requiring volunteers and party leaders. Perhaps you are in a hurry and just have time to rush in and use the shrine for a quick hint. Either way, now that you've found the way to the tavern, don't be a stranger in the future. We'll be here every month serving ale and sustenance to the weary traveller and we'll be glad to see you.

RUMOUR CORNER

Fill your mug with ale, then mingle with the old warriors seated around the blazing log fire to hear rumours and scandal from all over the kingdom.

LEGENDS OF VALOUR

There's a lot of building work going on in Mitteldorf. They do say that 27 miles of monster-filled sewers have been dug beneath the towns. Seems like a rum way to spend the town's poll tax if you ask me. I wouldn't be surprised if any visitor to the town ended up in deep sewage. Personally, I reckon U.S. Gold is behind it all. I did hear that they were calling the whole thing *Legends of Valour*, and defying anybody to pay the town a visit. They're claiming that they've rebuilt the whole place as a 3D scrolling world, full of different quests for different characters. Play it once as a thief, play it again as a fighter, then go back for another helping as a magic-user. Each time you play the quests are different, so you'll earn your keep as a hero in this town. The word on the streets of Mitteldorf is that the quests will be ready by Christmas, but anyone who accepts the offer will not be seen again until Easter.


The screen size of Legends can ba altered. The smaller the pic the faster the update.



The number of houses to explore seems limitless at times as you make your way around the walled city.



If you fancy a tipple youll find Mitteldorf has more than its fair share of drinking establishments.

CRUSADERS OF THE DARK SAVANT

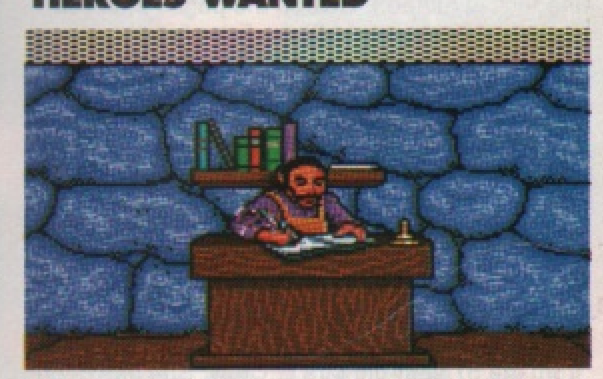
If you are a fan of the *Wizardry* series of role-playing games then it can be revealed that a working copy of the latest instalment – *Crusaders of the Dark Savant* has at last been glimpsed in this country. Kneecap-smashing Ninja priests plus bevies of beautiful girls in jet aircraft were seen beating up parties of heroes at the recent computer show in London. The quest involves the search for a mysterious secret left by a mad professor in a far-off world. The game looks like being a sure-fire winner and yet again we are being promised that it will be available for Christmas.


Remember the good old Sierra adventures? The graphics were crude, but they were lots of fun. Will Sierra's new, slick offerings still be around on the Amiga in the years to come?

SIERRA IS STILL ON-LINE

Rumours that Sierra will stop producing graphic adventures for the Amiga will be scotched this month. The latest rumour is that Sierra have vowed to continue producing Amiga versions of their popular *Quest* series of games, despite disappointing reviews in British Amiga magazines. This rumour will become a fact later this month when Sierra announce it officially.

HEROES WANTED


Might and Magic II's graphics look a little dated now, but if you are looking for a game that's a little cheaper, but still brimming with top-quality gameplay give it a try.

Notice is herby given that a hero is wanted to revisit the old (but still extremely exciting) world of Cron. This monster-filled land has been the teething ground for many a grizzled warrior and now is an ideal time to pay it a visit. Now that the

hullabaloo and the parades have gone in search of the latest fashionable quests, Cron is available as a budget title. Sign-up for a tour of *Might and Magic II* and rediscover the delights of a truly great quest that filled the dreams of yesteryear. The towns may look a little old fashioned but it can promise you the thrill of a lifetime at a rock bottom price. *Might and Magic II* from New World Computing – it's an experience that you'll treasure for ever.

SHRINE OF KNOWLEDGE

Here, in a darkened corner at the rear of the Tavern, you'll find the Shrine of Knowledge. It is here that all prayers for help can be answered. Draw near and kneel before the flickering candles. Insert one gold piece into the slot and speak loudly into the wire grille on the wall. If your heart is pure (and your gold is purer!) then the magic shrine will answer all your problems concerning RPGs and Adventures.

CORPORATION

Graeme Wilkinson from Whitley Bay has a question about the game *Corporation* which he bought in a compilation called *The Adventures*. When he loads the game, a message comes up telling him to insert a custom character disk or wait for the loading to resume. He has looked in the manual but found nothing on the subject. He wants to know if the custom character disk is a separate disk which he has to buy?

The Shrine replies: Find a mirror my son and gaze deeply at your reflection, then ask yourself, 'Is this the face of a hero?' In early days, others faced this awful challenge before you, and those who answered 'Yes' were able to send their photograph to the game's publishers and have it digitised onto a character disk. Using this disk during the loading procedure would replace the face of the game's hero with your own noble features. A chilling prospect! Only the god's know how many foolish mortals took up the offer, but lucky for you the option has probably been withdrawn by now.

LEISURE SUIT LARRY III

There are still some *Leisure Suit Larry* fans out there, and Jamie Aitkin from Musselburgh is one. His question relates to *Leisure Suit Larry III*. He has great difficulty in opening the combination lock on Suzi's locker in the Fat City Sports Club. He has looked at the back of the keycard and made a note of the writing, but he still does't know what the combination is.

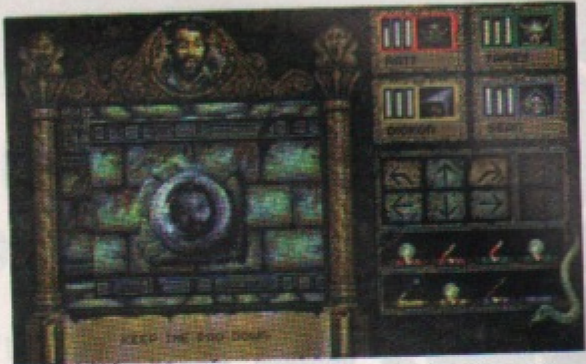
The Shrine replies: Do you like card tricks? Well here is a trick you will like, but not a lot... Open the magazine which came with the game manuals. (I do hope you have the magazine or the trick is ruined.). Search the pages until you find the adverts for the three firms listed on the back of the keycard. Take a note of each of the page numbers (making each one into a two digit number by adding a zero in front of any single page number). Now place the numbers together and you have the 6 number combination. Now take away the number you first thought of, and send the remaining number in gold coins to Tony Gill at CU Amiga.

KNIGHTMARE IN THE PRISON

The proof that adventures cover all ages comes from the 57 year old Mrs L. Crew. She has been playing *Knightmare* for ages now and has gotten as far as killing all the beasties in the garden and dungeon of Quest 1. She's now stuck at the prison. She's found the secret passage, removed the illusionary wall, but can't find the button mentioned in the February issue of CU Amiga which releases the baddies.

The Shrine replies: The *Knightmare* dungeon is full of illusion walls and hidden switches, so we must first ensure that we are both referring to the same illusion wall or you are doomed. The Prison is like a square block surrounded by a corridor. On the opposite side of the corridor is a wall which contains an illusion door. To find the door walk anti-clockwise around the corridor until you come to a spot where there are two floor grilles. Walk past the grille one pace, then face the outside wall. From this point (or at least the adjacent square!) you should be able to walk through the wall.

Once inside turn left and walk to the end of the short corridor. Turn left and look up. A small round, pink button is in the top-right corner. I also have some advice for a novice adventurer called Andrew Freshwater who is having great difficulty even beginning this game. The instruction to 'Keep the Pad Down' is confusing him. The answer is of course to place an object on the metal floor pad which is to the left of the notice, as it will keep a switch pressed and open a secret wall to the right of the notice.



Follow the advice of the Dungeon Master and 'Keep that pad down' if you want to get much further in Mindscape's Knightmare.

NEUROMANCER CODES

Tomas Nilsen from Norway desperately needs help with *Neuromancer* from Interplay. He is completely stuck and suffering from a lack of sleep because of this game. He doesn't know how to upgrade from Comlink 3.0 to 4.0? Or what the access code to level 2 IS in the Panther Moderns Database. Or where to find the Evasion Skill chip. The poor man clearly is in quite a state because of this, as he has started to hallucinate about killing whales.

The Shrine replies: This is a very strange world you speak of. A world of computer scientists, hackers and code breakers. There is no right or wrong here, no honest monster to defeat with a true heart. I have looked upon the solution and it makes little sense to someone not skilled in these godless arts. If you have the knowledge to understand these words, here are the facts you seek.

Database Code Password Panther Moderns: CHAOS MAINLINE
Hitachi: HITACHIBIO1 GENESPLICE
Fuji Electric: FUJI ROMCARDS and UCHIKATSUIRS IRS TAXINFO
SoftwareEnforcement: SOFTEN PERMAFROST (Comlink 4.0 is here)
Chiba Police: KEISATSU WARRANTS and SUPERTAC.

The Evasion Skill chip is found at Lupus (upgrade at Matrix). My final warning to you concerns the noble whale. This mighty beast harms no-one and spends its life singing in the depths of the ocean. Anyone who harms him can never become a true hero in the eyes of the Ancient Gods. He will be dammed to an eternity in the Limbo of Darkness contemplating his crime. Mark me well!

POLICE QUEST III

Mark Pearl is lost in Sierra's *Police Quest III*. He has been driving around for days in the police car trying to find the Industrial Estate. [*Personally, I wouldn't be seen dead in the back of a cop car – Ed.*]

The Shrine replies: If you study the map which comes with the game you should find the Industrial Estate on 325 South Second Street.

LEGEND OF FAERGHAIL

The penultimate call for help this month comes from Justin Pritchard, who lives in West Norwood [*That's a cry for help if ever I heard one – Ed.*]. His other problem concerns the *Legend of Faerghail*. Having mapped the lower level of the Dwarven Mine and reached the mountain, he cannot find the dragon who is supposed to be killed (he thinks!).

The Shrine replies: It is possible to go to many places in this quest without being anywhere near to completing it. The fact that you have mapped the mine and found the mountain does not tell me enough to know whether you are ready to meet the dragon in the final conflict. Have you been to the Elven Pyramid and found the Death Mask? Without this item you will never succeed. The Dragon is found, not on a mountain, but across a sea of lava which is under a volcano! This mighty monster is in a room which is locked with the clay key. The dragon can breathe fire twice, so your priest must be able to withstand his first attack and then use the healing staff to restore the others to life. After the second breath you may use the spell of Complete Healing to again revive your team. The Hammer of the Gods is the most effective way to dispose of the dragon, followed by the Death Mask being used on its blood.

MANHUNTER NEW YORK

D. Barret from New Zealand has a problem (apart from being from New Zealand that is). He is seeking advice on the third day of *Manhunter New York*, where he's stuck. He has just visited Harry Jones' apartment and smashed the stereo open to find Module C, but now doesn't know what to do. He remembers reading somewhere that he should revisit the hospital, because now the guard will be gone and he'll be able to find Module D. But he keeps finding that the guard is still there! He did find the note with the letters UCUCC written on it, but that is a mystery to him.

The Shrine replies: This is the point in the game where all mortals stumble and fall, so do not be downhearted. Do you remember the murder victim in the park? He tried to write down the surname of his killer, but died before he wrote the last letter. From other clues you should also know that the first name of the evil villain of this adventure is PHIL. Now use your MAD computer to find the home address of this swine, by trying all combinations of Phil Coo*.

And now I fear I must ask you to leave. The sky is lightening towards the east and soon the dawn will be here. The terrors of the night have shrunk back into that dark place at the corner of the mind and there they will stay until the night returns. Be on your guard and keep your face turned towards the wind. Good luck my friend. Till we meet again.

If you have a problem, or perhaps you have a piece of scandal which you wish to whisper in the Rumour Corner, write to Tony Gill at:- The Troll's Head, CU Amiga, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU


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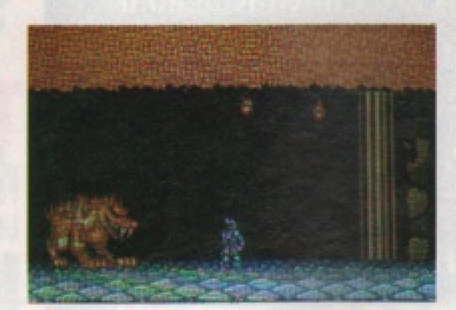
For the tips that are hip and the cheats that are neat, CU Amiga is the mag to consult. This month a tip-top crop of cop-outs and wheezes...

ELITE

If you still feel like a space cadet when playing this interplanetary flight-simulator, here's a cheat to make you more of a star with less of a trek. While you're on the copy protection screen type 'SARA' at the first attempt (or 'SUZANNE' if you have a later version of the game), then try the correct code from the manual. By pressing '+' and '*' you are now able to alter the quantity of arms and cargo.



'Wait a minute, that's not Basingstoke!' Maybe Sara or Suzanne can help.



Hot dog! Combustible canines are no longer a problem,once Arthur learns the secret of invincibility.



Arthur makes no bones about escaping death, aided by his CU cheats.

FIGHTER BOMBER

Okay, top guns, pay attention to the briefing. Typing 'BUCKAROO' while on the pilot select screen enables you to play any mission, and you can fly to your next waypoint by pressing D. Still here? Scramble!

FULL CONTACT

In this budget beat 'em up, the first game from Team 17, you can make your opponent give way by starting in one player mode and typing 'QAZWXEDCRFVTGBYHNUJM' - he should throw in the towel before the sequence is finished. Make sure you keep your hands off the 'S' key, however, otherwise you'll crash the game.

GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS

If this has got you spooked, type '!' instead of your name while you're on the high score table. This switches off the game's sprite detection and makes your character invulnerable. Typing 'DELBOY' on the credit screen has the same effect.

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

If you're worried about being grabbed by the ghosties (or an even worse alternative), type 'KAREN BROADHURST' when the screen informs you that the computer is ready, following the start of the game. Arthur is now invincible!

GREAT GIANA SISTERS

Although it was never released, this game, not entirely dissimilar from the adventures of a well-known Italian plumber, has apparently found its way into the hands of many ardent game players! To jump to the following level, hold down the A, R, M, I and N keys during play.

IK+

Unbeatable characters always give you the edge in beat 'em ups. In this one, hit the space bar if your character gets knocked down - it should be tougher when it gets up again.

LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE

If you want to ensure your driver always qualifies, select a two player game and type 'IN A BIG COUNTRY' and 'FIELDS OF FIRE' as the names. For a bonus game, enter 'MONSTER' and 'SEVENTEEN'.

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE

Who wants to live forever? If you do, at least in this challenging shoot 'em up from Ocean, pause the game and type 'IT'S EASY WHEN YOU KNOW HOW'. If this fails to give your character infinite lives try typing 'SIAMESE'.

MIDWINTER 2

End island-hopping misery: you need only capture nine islands to control them all. The ones you must seize are Lobos, Camargo, Ghazal, Satara, Sikasso, Djoum, Dhafia, Makat and Ndola.



'No more sitting in front of giant chocolate digestive biscuits for me. Not now I've learned the secret of success from CU Amiga.'

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT

'WIGAN NINJA' are the magic words to be entered on the high score board if you want to be able to skip levels simply by pressing the F7 key. If, on the other hand, you want to punish yourself, wait until you've scored 50,000 or more, die, and type 'SPECCY MODE' in the trusty high score section for double the number of enemy sprites.

PACLAND

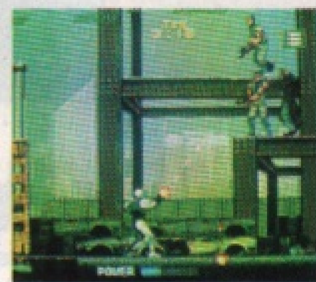
Enter the word 'AVALON' during the title screen and unlimited lives will be yours. A short and sweet cheat.

PANG

If the balloon-bursting action is getting too much for you, typing 'WHAT A NICE CHEAT' on the map screen allows you to skip levels.

ROBOCOP

To give limitless energy to the law-enforcing boy in metallic blue, press Return to pause the game, then type 'BEST KEPT SECRET'. The game will re-commence and you may fire at will.



'Get down from there, Canary Wharf isn't finished yet!'

ROBOCOP 2

'SERIALINTERFACE', if typed during the title screen, will cause the computer to activate the cheat mode (and tell you so). Throughout the game, energy can be topped up by pressing F9, and levels skipped with F10.

RODLAND

Storm's cutesy, but addictive, coin-op conversion has a couple of cheats worth knowing. For an inexhaustible supply of lives for your character, press Help five times while the game is paused, then resume play. Afterwards, you'll find levels may be skipped by pressing the space-bar.

WIZKID



Here's a whole host of cheats for the secret rooms and game in Ocean's WIZKID, containing more lavatorial references than a double-sized edition of Viz! Many thanks to Lee Beardsmore of Heckmondwike, who compiled them – a game is on its way.

In Round 1, make sure you get enough money to buy a token from the shop. Wizkid should then leave the shop in body form, climb down the well, and enter the MEN'S toilet.

Use the token on the (bubblegum ?) vending machine. Wizkid blows a bubble (balloon?) and floats up to a room containing an exit and a MEN'S toilet. If Wizkid goes into the MEN'S toilet he will find doors leading to another MEN'S toilet and a LADIES' toilet. By going to the far right of this room and firing, Wizkid will pass through an invisible door.

A message will now be on display at the top of the screen, stating 'SECRET ROOM NUMBER ZERO'. There should also be an EXIT on the right and a MEN'S toilet on the left. Send Wizkid into the MEN'S toilet. The message will change to 'SECRET ROOM NUMBER 1'. The following levels, a secret game, and a continue may all be accessed from this room. The directions for the various choices are given below. If you choose the wrong door or wish to return to this screen, go through the invisible door on the right.

LADIES, MEN, MEN, MEN, LADIES	Round 2
MEN, LADIES, LADIES, MEN, MEN	Round 3
MEN, MEN, LADIES, MEN, LADIES	Round 4
LADIES, LADIES, LADIES, LADIES, MEN, MEN	Round 5
LADIES, LADIES, MEN, MEN, MEN, LADIES	Round 6
LADIES, MEN, MEN, LADIES, MEN, MEN	Round 7
MEN, LADIES, MEN, LADIES, MEN, LADIES	Round 8
MEN, MEN, MEN, LADIES, MEN, MEN	Round 9
MEN, MEN, MEN, MEN, LADIES, LADIES	Continue
LADIES, LADIES, MEN, MEN, LADIES, LADIES	Sound Test
MEN, LADIES, LADIES, MEN, MEN, MEN, LADIES	Game (Wizaroids)

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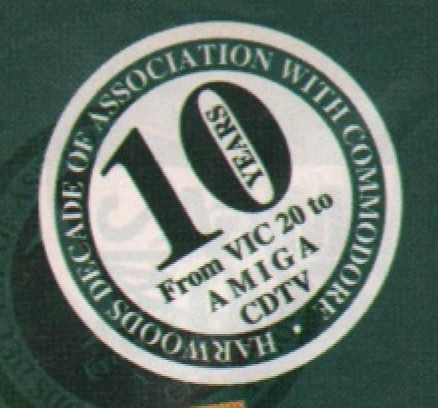
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SWIFT 24/24E/224	BLACK/COLOUR	£4.75	£22.95	£16.45	£94.95
STAR LC10*/20P	BLACK/COLOUR	£4.45*P	£23.95*P	£5.95*	£34.95*
STAR LC200	BLACK/COLOUR	£5.95 ZX9	£32.95 ZX9	£12.45 ZX9CL	£64.95 ZX9CL
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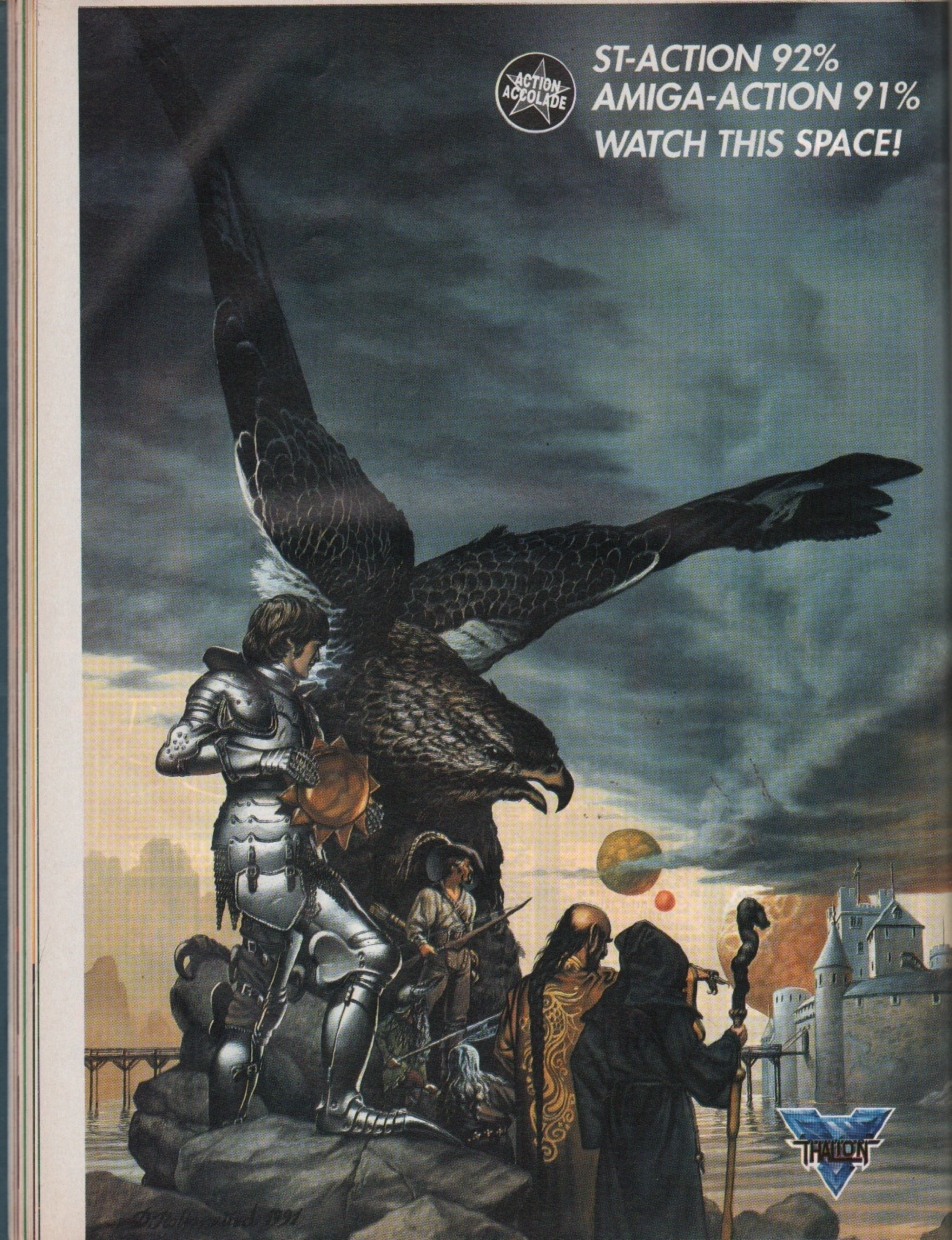
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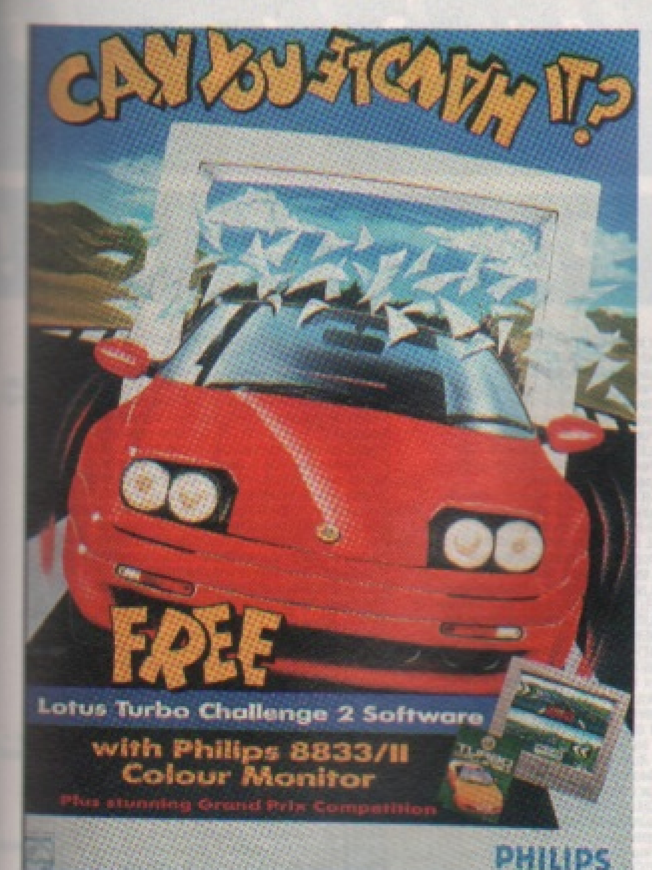
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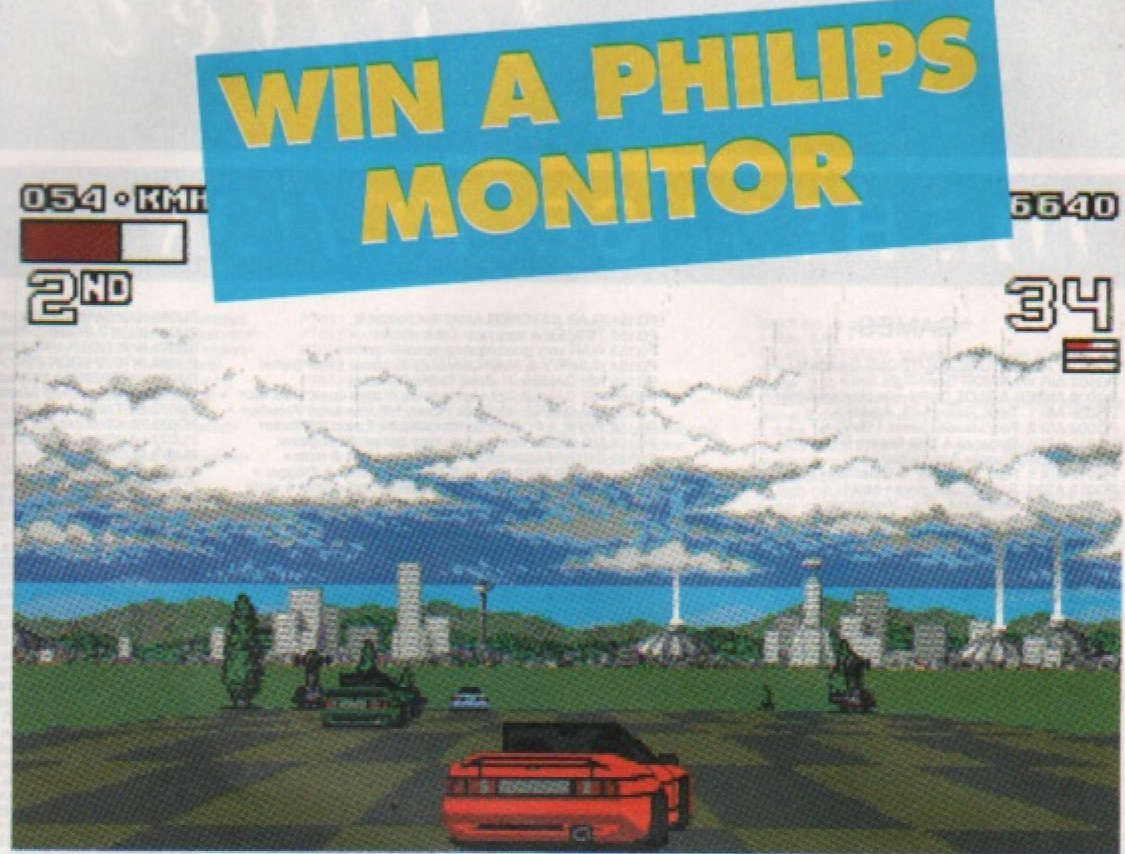
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To celebrate this amazing deal CU Amiga, in conjunction with Philips, will be giving away a brand new CM8833-II, plus grab-bags of Gremlin goodies. All you have to do is answer the questions to the right to the best of your ability and send the completed coupon to: Philips Can Handle it Competition, CU Amiga, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

1. THE AMIGA VIDEO SIGNAL IS RGB, WHICH STANDS FOR:

a. Real Gaussian Blur
b. Red Green Blue
c. Russet Gold Blue
d. Rob Green's Bike

2. WHICH OF THESE GAMES WAS PRODUCED BY GREMLIN?

a. Monty fixes the recession
b. Monty and the liquidiser
c. Monty does Dallas
d. Lotus Turbo Challenge

3. WHERE WILL THE 1993 BRITISH GRAND PRIX BE HELD?

a. Yellowstone
b. Silverstone
c. Coppertone
d. Ouagadagou

4. WHICH OF THESE WAS FIRST DEVELOPED BY PHILIPS?

a. Jam doughnut
b. Sliced bread
c. Digital Compact Cassette
d. Steve Merrett

RULES

1. No gouging, biting or holding
2. No correspondence will be entered into
3. No purchase necessary
4. No employees of EMAP, Philips, Gremlin, or H.M. Treasury are allowed to enter
5. No smoking
6. No entries will be accepted after the 30th November
7. No questioning the judge's decision
8. No peeking 'til Christmas
9. No way, no day

Answers:

1.............. 2.............. 3.............. 4..............

Name..............................

Address..............................

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PG008 ASI 1 Tanx, Rollerpede, Avatris +
PG009 ASI 2 Four classic games ! Get it +
PG010 ASI 3 Megaball & Drip Superb !+
PG011 ASI 4 Frogger & more games +
PG012 ASI 5 Raid, Go Looly & Retaliator+
PG013 ASI 6 Pacman & 4 more - cool !
PG014 ASI 7 Moonbase, Trix, Mightworks
PG015 ASI 8 Airace2, Hball, + more !+
PG016 ASI 9 Battle pong & Blizzard +
PG017 ASI 10 Escape, Pipeline, Pickout+
PG018 ASI 11 Dad, Connex,Reversi+Trippin+
PG019 ASI 12 Llamatron, Car, Powerpong
PG020 ASI 13 Twintris + more good games
PG021 ATIC ATAC Really playable ! +
PG023 BATTLEFORCE strategy war game
PG024 BLACKJACK Good card game !+
PG026 CASTLE OF DOOM Excellent! Get it +
PG027 CHINESE CHECKERS Computer version!
PG028 COLOSSUS & WORLD Fab adventures !+
PG029 CROSSWORD COMPILER As it says !+
PG031 DARKSTAFF Spec emulated adventure!+
PG032 DRAGONS CAVE D&D style game Mega+
PG034 ETERNAL ROME Strategy & DOMINOES+
PG035 ENSIGNIA MAZE Nice little maze game!
PG036 FLASHBIER 200 levels of boulderdash !
PG037 FRANTIC FREDDIE Classic platform game
PG038 GALACTIC FOOD FIGHT Cute platformer!
PG039 GAMES GALORE1 Drip tiles Quix & more!
PG040 GAMES GALORE2 Welltrix Skyfight etc!
PG041 GAMES GALORE3 Gravattack Asteroids etc!
PG042 GAMES GALORE4 Mr Munk Diplomacy & more!
PG043 GAMES GALORE5 Cosmo Cat & mouse Etc!
PG044 GAMES GALORE6 Tint Jumpy Def Atc etc!
PG045 GROWTH Shoot the brain game!
PG046 HACK Great text adventure-Infocom style! +
PG047 HOLLYWOOD TRIVIA Nice Trivia Game! +
PG048 HOLY GRAIL One of the best Text adventures+
PG049 JETMAN like the old Jetpac game!
PG051 KILLER CARS Great filled vectors game!+
PG052 LAMER GAME Operation wolf type game!+
PG053 LARN A superb text adventure game +
PG056 LASERZONE Great old 64 classic shoot em up!
PG058 LETTRIX Nice Tetris type puzzle!
PG059 LORE OF CONQUEST space trading D&D game
PG060 MARBLE SLIDE Puzzle game, build slides!
PG061 MASTER OF THE TOWN Shoot the signposts !
PG062 MENTAL IMAGE 1 Gridrunner Invaders & rebound+
PG063 MORIA Text based D&D adventure
PG064 NAPOLEONIC WAR SIMULATOR strategy game!
PG065 NESTOR CARD GAME Good cards game +
PG066/67 NETHACK D&D Adventure needs 2 drives
PG068 NO MANS LAND Hi tech war game-shoot em up. +
PG069 NU GAME Mega Shoot em up with good graphics
PG070 PETERS QUEST Rescue the maiden ! +
PG071 POM POM GUNNER Like beach-head on the 64+
PG072 PROPERTY MARKET Become a millionaire !!!
PG073 RAPHAELS REVENGE Turtle game in SEUCK!+
PG074 RETURN TO EARTH Elite space trading game! +
PG075 RINGS OF ZON Shareware/strategy game!
PG076 SEVEN TILES Speedball type game-MEGA!
PG078 SCUM HATERS Shoot em up done in SEUCK!+
PG079 SEALANCE A submarine strategy game +
PG080 SERENE Good quality shoot up!+
PG081 SERENE II Follow up to the above game +
PG082 SIMPSONS GAME Shoot em up done in SEUCK+
PG083 SPLITTING Puzzle game!
PG084 ST BASH Blast the Atari Sts!!!
PG085 STARFLEET Nice game done in SEUCK!+
PG086/87 STAR TREK US version by Jim Barber(2)
PG088 NEXT GENERATION Strategy game in Hires!+
PG090 SUBCULTURE Playable 1st level of game!
PG091 SUPER TWINRIS Superb 2 player tetris!!+
PG093 TENNIS Good game (Some language) 1mg
PG094 TRAIN CONSTRUCTION KIT make your own tracks+
PG096/7 TRUCKIN ON PD version of this trading game!
PG099 EVIL DEAD DEMO GAME Shoot the goulies!
PG100 THE JAR Nice jumping & running game!
PG101 THE INSIDERS CLUB Stocks & shares game
PG102 WATERMINES Nice Boulderdash type game!
PG103 WET BEAVER GAMES Version of pong game!+
PG104 WONDERSOFT GAMES Nice compilation pack!
PG105 WIZZYS QUEST Fab arcade adventure game!+
PG106 YELP Nice painter type game!+
PG107 ZEUS Very popular block puzzle game!+
PG108 ASI 14 ChinaChallenge2 & Amiga Columns!+
PG109 TOMCAT Superb World war II shootup!+
PG110 SUPER SKODA CHALLENGE Nice car racegame!+
PG111 MIDNIGHT THIEF A nice text adventure game!
PG112 ULTIMATE CARD GAMES Cribbage,Patience etc.
PG114 CHINA SHOP Smash everything in sight!!
PG121 A500+ GAMES PACK 21 games to run on a plus+
PG123 LEMMINGOIDS Blast the Asteroids(Lemmingoids?)
PG124 TOTAL WAR Great new Risk type game,ok plus!+
PG125 CARD SHARP 5 fab card games! +
PG126 SKYFLYER Superb WWII shoot em up!+
PG127 AIRMANIA Super platform game from Addware +
PG128 CHEAT WORKS Stacks of new cheats
PG129 PUGGLES Brilliant Q*Bert game !
PG130 BATTLEMENTS Conversion of Hunchback game!+
PG131 ATLANTIS A nice looking strategy game! +
PG132 ASI 15 Battlecars Lettrix & Mambamove!
PG133 ASI 16 Wastelands, Mission X, Pacman +
PG134 ASI 17 Tomcat, Defenda, Jetman Bugblaster+
PG135 ASI 18 Henry in Panic Skyflyer Omega race!
PG136 ASI 19 Growth,FranticFreddy & more!
PG137 BALL LIGHTNING Average platform game.
PG138 BATTLE OF BRITAIN & WAR strategy war games
PG139 DUNGEONS OF MADROJ Excellent D&D game
PG140 MIND GAMES Stacks of fun with this !
PG141/3 SWORD OF WARLOCK RPG adventure 2drives
PG144 REVENGE OF MUTANT CAMELS Classic shootup!+
PG145 YUM YUM Nice little pacman game for kids!+
PG146 ASI 20 Microbes Hollywood trivia Coin drop +
PG147 QUADRIX Excellent puzzle game +
PG148 COSMIC RACER Simple Space Harrier type game!
PG149 A NIGHT AT THE TOWN Witty text adventure+
PG150 E -TYPE exellent asteroids clone
PG151 FLAG CATCHER Avoid the bombs !!
PG152 TETREN A very nice Tetris clone
PG153 WAR very good strategy/arcade game+
PG154 NUMPTY & ALIEN INVADERS Manic miner game!
PG155 ASI GAMES 21 Zeus Tettrix & more +
PG156 ASI GAMES 22 Lemmingoids,Wizzys quest Duel etc+
PG157 ASI GAMES 23 Quick money,BIP,Interferon Arcadia+
PG158 PORK A PORK Pop the balloons & stop the foxes+
PG159 MR BRICK Great mario type collect coins game!
PG160 ENTERTAINMENT+ 1 Klondyke Hball & more+
PG161 ENTERTAINMENT+ 2 Zerg BounceNbob Frogger +
PG162 ENTERTAINMENT+ 3 spacewars, squamble & more
PG163 ENTERTAINMENT+ 4 Zon Hanoi Yelp & more +
PG164 GAME TAMER 2.3 joystick tester & 268 cheats+
PG165 SOLID SQUAD Nice little sriving game
PG166 RAID III Wicked new shootemup !!!! +
PG167 SERENE III From the author of Raid !!!+
PG168 WHATSITSNAME Great new puzzle game just in
PG169 ASI GAMES 24 Revenge Dux Croak 3d maze +
PG170 ASI GAMES 25 Another mega collection - Buy it ! +
PG171 ASI GAMES 26 Superpacman 92 Smash tv Ashido +
PG172 ASI GAMES 27 Addictive card games. Really good!+
PG173 GHOSTSHIP A very nice 3D Freescape type game!
PG174 AMOS CRICKET Shareware cricket game,1 or 2plr+
PG175 SPACETRAX A 2 player shoot each other up game+
PG176 TECHNOBAN GAME Quite a nice puzzle game! +
PG177 HELLZONE Stunning R-type clone-GET THIS! +
PG178 MENTAL IMAGE 2 Three Excellent new games +
PG179 BLOB A tricky game written in ShootEmUp Kit +
PG180 SECTOR 1 A nice game similar to alien breed +
PG181 STRIKEBALL Baseball type game done in Amos +
PG182 ETHOS Simple graphical adventue Sinbad style +
PG183 CATACOOMBS A great D&D style game. VG.GFX +
PG184 FATAL MISSION Very good Shootemup game +
PG185 ARAZMAX Similar to the game microbes. Good +
PG186 ASI 28 Doody, DrMario, Invaders2, Madbomber2+
PG187 ASI 29 DOG, Rome, Nova, B-Bal, Atax, Quadrix+
PG188 ASI 30 Bounce & Blast, Total Fire etc! +

EDUCATION

PE001/5 EDUCATION SET science programs for ages 11+ +
PE006 KIDSPAINTFab little talking colouring book+
PE007/8 LEARN & PLAY Maths, spelling etc. 5-10 yrs +
PE009 STORYLAND 2 Save toyland from the witch! +
PE010 TOTAL CONCEPTS ASTROMOMY book on a disk.+
PE011 TOTAL CONCEPTS DINOSAURS Book on a disk+
PE013 SIMON & SPACE MATHS Talking maths program
PE014 SPANISH, FRENCH, GERMAN TUTOR Translator
PE015 TREASURE SEARCH find the lost treasure ! +
PE016 COLOUR THE ALPHABET learn letters & colours! +
PE018 TYPING TUTOR, Superspell Budget & Mecalender! +
PE019 DUNKS DTP A sort of DeskTopPublisher for kids +

BUSINESS

PB001 AMICASH bank management program+
PB002/3 ANALYTICALC Superb spreadsheet!+ (2)
PB004 ASI LABEL PRINTERS 3 of the best+
PB005 BANKIN control your cheque book! +
PB006 BUSINESS CARD MAKER Nice program+
PB007 CLERK Complete accounts package+
PB008 DESKTOP PUBLISHER Simple to use +
PB009 FLEXYBASE DATABASE Address keeper+
PB010 JOURNAL Keep track of finances
PB011 MISC.BUSINESS Geotime, Grocery list, Calc
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PB018 WORDWRIGHT Wordpro with spellchecker! +
PB019 BUSINESS LETTERS contracts, letters + more+
PB020 TEXT ENGINE 3.4 NEW Version !!! +
PB021 AMIBASE PRO. Powerful easy to use Dbase +
PB022 BBASE II v5.5 A fast & easy to use database+
PB023 FORMS REALLY UNLIMITED form creation prog+
PB024 LAST WILL & TESTAMENTS Just in case !+
PB025 EDWORD Brand new wordpro - V.good +
PB026 AGRAPH Superb Program graphing data +
PB027 BOILERPLATE Business letters & Wordpro +
PB028 LITTLE OFFICE Intergrated Wpro,Sst,Dbase,Gfx+

UTILITIES

PU002 A-GENE Good geneology program +
PU003 A68K 68000 Assember program
PU004a/b A64 EMULATOR NEW VERSION 2.0 (2)
PU005 AMATEUR RADIO 1 Interest to radio hams +
PU006 ANIMATED POINTER PACK Moving pointers!
PU010 ARP 1.3 Amigados replacement project! +
PU012 ASI GRAFFIX UTILS graphics convertors etc+
PU013 ASI BOOT UTILITIES bootblock utilities +
PU015 BIORYTHMS, STARCHART 2 Good programs+
PU017/20 C MANUAL II (4) Learn to program !!!
PU021 C-LIGHT RAY TRACER Good program+
PU022 CHEMESTHETICS molecule displayer +
PU023 CHET SOLACE UTILS 26 utilities!
PU024 CLERK Manage your bank account!
PU025/32 8 disk set of clipart! good. +
PU033/35 COUNTACH CLIPART 3 disks full! +
PU036 CURSER BASIC COMPILER Just what you need!+
PU037 D-COPY The best PD disk copier +
PU038 DARKSTAR UTILITIES 3 Assorted utils!
PU039 DBW The foreunner to Skulpt 3D !!! +
PU040 DEMOLISHER 168 UTILTIES - MEGA !+
PU041/43 DESKBENCH alternative workbench (3)
PU045 DIRECT ACTION Edit animation sequences etc.
PU046 DISKMASTER 3.0 Cli utility, not dos 2!
PU047 DOPE INTROMAKER Make your own intros
PU048 DYNAMITE FONTS II CutNPaste fontscreens
PU049 DYNAMITE FONTS More CutNPaste Fonts
PU055 ELECTROCAD DEMO circuit designer +
PU056 EXILE FONTS Excellent CnP fonts+
PU058 FONTS AND RAM MANAGER BIG video fonts+
PU059 FONTS & SURFACES Backdrops & fonts+
PU061 GENESIS DEMO fractal generator really good!
PU062 GRAPHICS UTILITIES Various misc. programs+
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PU064 HARDDRIVE UTILS MRBackup & FixDisk & more +
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PU066 ICONS Cramm packed with icons !+
PU067 IMPLODER V4.0 Megacrunching Util+
PU068 INTERFERON PRO Antivirus bootblocks?
PU069 JAZZBENCH Alternative Wb for 1.2/3 users
PU071 JR COMM 1.02 Modem users comms package
PU072 METALLION UTILS Font Editors & more utils+
PU073/76 KING JAMES BIBLE Old&New testaments (4)+
PU077 LANGUAGES DISK Forth, Modula 2, X-Lisp Logo+
PU078 M-CAD Hires design package. Excellent +
PU079 MACVIEW,DRAW,ROTATE 3 unusual progs.Good!
PU080 MESSY-SID Read/Write PC Files, Brilliant!+
PU083 MORSE PROGRAMS for the radio hams.
PU084 MYSTIC HARDWARE MODS Docs for modifications+
PU086/7 NORTH C 1.3 (2) Complete C compiler & libs+
PU088 NORTH C 1.3 This is the packed 1 disk version!+
PU089 PASCAL COMPILER needs a good CLI knowledge+
PU090 IBEM PC EMULATOR This version lasts 15 minutes+
PU091 PENDLE 200 MEGAUTILS An essential collection+
PU095 PRINTER DRIVER GENERATOR & new drivers+
PU096 PRINTER DRIVER UTILITIES Various utils etc.
PU097 PRINT STUDIO V1.25 Prints pics & text etc.+
PU101 QUICKBENCH Instant WB uses RAD: very clever!
PU102 RAZOR 1911 Excellent collection of utilities
PU108 ROT A simple 3D drawing package.Very popular.+
PU109/10 (2 disk) Structured clipart for Ppage +
PU112/3 SOMETHING FOR NOTHING Video Utils&Fonts+
PU115 ST EMULATOR Run Atari ST software !! 2 Drives
PU116 SUPER 'C' DISK Collection of C commands
PU117 SUPERKILLERS Virus Killers! You need this! +
PU118 SUPER WORKBENCH Alternative workbench!
PU121/2 TV GRAPHICS Dpaint backdrops&Fonts+(2)
PU124 ULTIMATE ICONS Iconmaster,Iconlab,+
PU125 ULTRAPAINT v3 A nice paint package!
PU126 UTILITIES COLLECTION About 100 utils!+
PU127 UTILITIES 1 Another collection,about 40!
PU129/30 VIDEO APPLICATIONS Video utilities+
PU132/3 WINDOWSBENCH A Windows 3/WB2 lookalike
PU134 WORKBENCH HACKS amusing stuff !
PU136 ZX SPECTRUM EMULATOR Now with sound +
PU138 LAST HOPE Recover lost files with this!
PU139 GRAPHICS CONVERTERS PC-AMiga gfx Converter
PU140 LITTLEBENCH File copier & utils Dos2 only
PU141/2 TAROT II Learn about your stars !+
PU143 OPTIUTILS 1 Crammed full ! Get it+
PU144 OPTIUTILS 2 Get this disk too ! +
PU145 OPTICOMMS 1 Ncomm 1.921 Lharca, Zoo Arc+
PU147 BEATRIX POTTER CLIPART Nice large clips! +
PU149 ELECTRONIC PROTOTYPER Veroboard designer
PU150 FOOTBALL LEAGUE ED Update league positions
PU151 BROTHERHOOD UTILS 1 Dcopy,Scenery,Qed +
PU152/66 CLIPART SET: 15 Disks of the BEST clipart +
PU167 MULTI-PLOT Superb data plotting program ! +
PU168a/b RAY-DANCE Demo version RayTracer! (2)
PU169 GELIGNITE FONTS CutNPaste fonts+
PU170 P-SUITE Disk magazine maker+
PU171 OPTICOMMS 2 Ncomm 2 & more +
PU172 WORDPOWER Solve Anagrams/Crosswords+
PU173 LSD UTILITIES 23 new utils!
PU174 ASTRO 22 professional astrology program! +
PU175 GELIGNITE FONTS II Excellent IFF fonts+
PU176 GELIGNITE FONTS III More of above!!+
PU177/8 BENCHMASTER Windowsbench & Messysid!!
PU180 RICHARD SMEDLEY COMP VAT checker & more
PU181 RENDER V1 3D Raytrace shading program
PU182 STOCK ANALYST Technical analysis program+
PU183 AMYGEN Excellent geneology program+
PU184 PROCALC V1.0 professional calculator!
PU185/8 COSMOPOLITAN FONTS (4) Packed with fonts+
PU189 TRONIK VIRUS KILLERS 21 virus killers & docs+
PU190 BENCHWORK 1.0 workbench alternative
PU191 LANDBUILDER fractal land generator+
PU192 SID 2 Get this ! directory util !!! MEGA!+
PU193 PLUS 8 Mandelvroom showiz arq addmenu
PU194 PLUS 9 Mouseblanker Nuke Back&front
PU195 PLUS 10 Popup Filesearch Dcopy2 Fblank
PU196 PLUS 11 Lablemaker Calckey Multinstall
PU197 MOBED 2 Dpaint for Sprites & bobs+
PU198 VIDEO WIPES Masks & fades Dpaint 3/4 +
PU199 TDM SLIDESHOW GENERATOR wipe/fade pics
PU200 LITTLEBENCH 1.3 Now for 1.3 owners !!
PU201 MALICE FONTS Excellent tiny fonts for Dpaint+
PU202 CYCLOPS Weird Plasma/fractal creator ! +
PU203 SCOPE 184 utils & clips for Ppage
PU204 GATOR GRAPHICS Dpaint Tutorial disk+
PU205 PC TASK Wicked PC Emulator Get it !!! +
PU206 MSDOS PROGS PC Shareware Progs for PCTask +
PU207 MULTISID Combines SID2 & Multidos(PC-AMIGA)
PU208 ASI HANDYTOOLS 3 A mega compilation of utils
PU209 FRED FISH CATALOGUE contains FISH 1 - 670 +
PU210 PCQ PASCAL Latest version of this Pascal compiler+
PU211 AMIGA PUNT A horse race predicting program!!! +
PU212 PERM CHECK PLUS This is a pools prediction prog
PU213 RACE RATER Another horse racing program!! +
PU214 DIR WORK A Sid type file copying program! +
PU215 CAPTIONATOR Superb shareware video titling! +
PU216 WBASE 1.3 A multitasking workbench database! +
PU217 BROTHERHOOD UTILS 2 More utilities for the plus!+
PU218 ORDER Excellent demo of this commercial Dbase+
PU219 WBHACKS+ Good collection of hacks for + owners
PU220 HUNTERSOFT GFX Convert B/w pics to color
PU221-225 8 COLOR ICONS Hundreds of new icons +
PU226/7 C-EYES FONTS For use in Dpaint, WB, etc.(2) +

ANIMATIONS

PA001 AEGIS ANIMATIONS Juggler, Plane & Marlyn+
PA029 APPLECUS ANIMATION Great anim of an abacus
PA030 BAD BIRD ANIMATION Not too bad this one.+
PA031 BASKETBALL A basketball player 1 Meg! +
PA032 BONGO ANIMATION Animation of bongo player!
PA033 BUSY BEE Cute animation of a freaky bee+
PA034 CLOTHES PEG Bounvcing clothes peg?
PA035 COOL COUGAR Good cartoon style anim! +
PA036 CX1 SPACESHIP Excellent RT anim +
PA037 DART ANIMATION Dart pierces egg!!
PA038 DRAGONS LAIR TIMEWARP Good demo! +
PA039 ERIC-S AMY VS WALKER Cute & sexy! 1.5M
PA040 ERIC-S BATMAN vs JOKER Very funny!!!+
PA041 ERIC-S COTOTE 2 A corker!! 2M
PA042 ERIC-S COYOTE STRIKES BACK 1mg too! +
PA043 ERIC-S MORE AEROTOONS Very witty !!!+
PA044 ERIC-S SHUTTLECOCK plays with satalite.
PA045 ERIC-S STEALTHY II Mig-29 vs Stealthy !+
PA046 FRANKLYN THE FLY Day in the life of a fly! +
PA048 GYMNAST ANIM Gymnast swings on bars! +
PA049 HAPPY MAN ANIMATIONS 4 nice anims all 512k
PA050 HIGHLANDER SWORD ANIM Scotsman dancing
PA051 HOLIDAY ANIMATION Not too bad.
PA053/4 LIGHT CYCLES (2) Tron animation+
PA055 LUXO TEENAGER A good lamp animation! +
PA056 MAGICIAN II Good RT animation+
PA057 MAGICIAN ANIMATION Good animation! +
PA058 MINER ANIM Miner loading coals!! +
PA059 MR POTATO HEAD Potato man in cabaret! +
PA060 NEWTONS CRADLE RT animation +
PA061 PHAROAH ANIMATION Mask animation! +
PA062 PIANO ANIMATION Not too bad!+
PA063 PORKY PIG ANIM Funny pig anim!
PA064 PROBE SEQUENCE Alien life probe? +
PA065/68 REAL 3D (4) Superb of the program+
PA069 REAL THINGS HORSES DEMO Demo anim! +
PA070 SHUTTLECOCK ANIM 2 shuttles+satellite+
PA071 THE BOINGS 2 Zebedee characters!!
PA072 THE JUGGLER A classic amiga demo!+
PA073 THE KNIGHT ANIM Knight exits a book!+
PA074 THE WALKER vs The Helicopter - Mega !+
PA075 THE WALKER vs A2000 A classic ! +
PA076 UGLY MUG ANIM Mug goes for a spin! +
PA077 UNICYCLE ANIM Super anim of unicycle & car! +
PA079 MR POTATO HEAD 2 Another fab Chris Hill anim
PA080 LEMMINGS ANIMATION Very funny indeed
PA082 TIN TOY ANIMATION Ray traced tin soldier! +
PA083 MORE CLASSY ANIMS The Bionic Bimbo !+
PA084 JAMES POND v LEMMINGS I like it !!!
PA085 JET ANIMATION Fractal Flight but better! +
PA086 FRACTAL ANIMATION full screen low flying anim
PA087 TEA POT ANIMATION Very good RT anim
PA088/9 MR POTATO HEAD:The circus act!!! (2)
PA090 TOO MUCH 3D Ship flys out of monitor!! +
PA091/3 GAS TURBINE, STEAM & PETROL ENGINE (3)
PA094 AMY JOGS,WALKS & SNEEZES by Eric Schwartz
PA095 HOW TO RUN INTO A WALL by Eric Schwartz! +
PA096 OH NO MORE CLASSY ANIMS The last chuck? +
PA097 A SMALL STATION AT KHERNE New 1mg version
PA098 EASTER ISLAND ANIM A nice fractal animation+
PA099 ATF AGILITY new ES anim, very witty as usual+
PA100 VTOL CONTEST Check out this new ES anim ! +

AGATRON

AGA01 RED LOTUS Spinning down the road. Fantastic !
AGA02 JET FIGHTER landing on a runway, basic anim +
AGA03 STAR TREK - Shuttle fly past - Great ! 1m +
AGA04 KLINGON CRUISER Flying around your screen
AGA05 STAR TREK KLINGON fires torpedoes 1m +
AGA06 LOGO, plus a great star wars fly by animation.
AGA07 STAR WARS FIGHTER doing loops etc 1m +
AGA08 STAR WARS, a great ani mfrom the movie (CLI)
AGA09 STAR WARS - Fighter fly by, impressive 1m +
AGA10 STAR TREK - Enterprise in dry dock. Incredible+
AGA11 TRON - Tank v Deactivator. Good vectors +
AGA12 TRON ANIMATION - Not one of the best +
AGA13 ROBO 1 A nice ray traced robot waving 1m +
AGA14 STAR TREK Workbee & Reliant. 3 shots +
AGA15 LOTUS CAR, Billiards, & Jet Fighter animations! +
AGA16 STAR TREK Various anims from the star trek game
AGA17 STAR TREK TWOK animation Short but okay +
AGA18 STAR TREK - Enterprise fly by. Short anim +
AGA19 BOND ANIM - Copter plus a car, not too amazing
AGA20 Huey 2 A helicopter leaving a landing pad.+
AGA21 ENTERPRISE DOCKING WITH SPACE STATION
AGA22 ENTERPRISE APPROCHING stunning anim ! 1m
AGA23 FLEET MANOEVRE Stunning animation! 1m +
AGA24 KULI PEN animation & Ping pong. Great! 1m +
AGA25 THE RUN , a suberb car chase 1mg +
AGA26 SHIP ROCKING at sea,/enterprise leaves dock+
AGA27 BOOK OPENING Nice anim of a book opening.
AGA28 SHUTTLE & ENTERPRISE Fab anim by Richter+
AGA29 MILLENIUM FALCON The ship being chased -1m
AGA30 HYPERSPACE animation & Landing animation 1m
AGA31 PORSCHE anim rising out of table 1 mg. +
AGA32 SPACE - Space probe flying away 1m +
AGA33 PROBE Bird of prey animation & Klingonhit! 1m
AGA34 SPACE OFFICE Star trek anim, a little short +
AGA35 SPACE PROBE, great anim of probe zooming off
AGA36 BIRD OF PREY, loop the loop animation 1m +
AGA37 TOBIAS GOES KNACKERS - Check this out ! 1m
AGA38 TOTALLY WICKED ! Shuttle & Enterprise (2 MEG)

POWERANIMS

PP001/2 ANTI LEMMINGS (2) This is Brilliant! 2M
PP003 AT THE MOVIES Cute anim of Amy squirrel 1.5M
PP004/7 AUTOMATED LIGHT (4) Battlestar galactica! 3M
PP008/10 BUZZED (3) Great anim of wasp crashing! 2M
PP011/12 DATING GAME (2) Very witty!, Get it. 3.5M!
PP013/15 DRAGONS LAIR 3mg animation + sound!!
PP016 GULF WAR Another ES production! Good 2M!
PP017 JUGGLER II Juggler meets Ms Juggler! Fab! 1.5M
PP018/20 LOST IN SPACE (3) From the TV series 2M
PP021/24 LANDING (4) Tobias Richter poweranim 4M!
PP025/27 STATION AT KHARN (3) Incredible 2M demo
PP028/33 UPGRADE (6) Massive 5 mg animation!!
PP034/5 VAUX KILLERS (2) An old but good anim 2M!
PP036/7 WALKER DEMO (2) A 2mg version of a classic
PP038/9 WAVE SAILING (2) Nice anim of wave sailor 1.5M
PP040/43 AT THE MOVIES II (4) Hilarious ! 1mg-3mg
PP044/45 AMY V WALKER II (2) Another witty ES demo
PP046 SWEET REVENGE Coyote vs Roadrunner ! 1.5mg
PP047 GOTTA GO Crazy dog walks his master? 1.5mg +
PP048/9 A DAY AT THE BEACH Stunning ! 2 Mg
PP050 UNSPORTING Wicked aerotoon from Schwartz+
PP051/2 CHARLY CAT Super Shwartzlike cartoon! 2mg
PP053/4 CHARLY CAT AT THE BEACH 2nd fab anim 2mg
PP055/6 APC MISSION Superb walker & tank battle 3mg

DEMOS

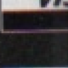
PD002 ALARM MEGADEMO Acid type video demo!+
PD005 AMOS 3D DEMO Shows some great effects!+
PD007 ANARCHY INSPIRATION IS NONE Superb!
PD008 ANARCHY MADNESS II Bobs vectors & music!
PD009 ANARCHY SYSTEM VIOLATION Vector Bob Gfx
PD010 ANARCHY DIGITAL INNOVATION Their latest!

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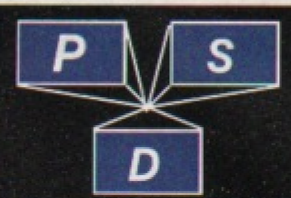
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THE BEST SELECTION OF PD IN THE UK !

PD011 ANIMATORS MEGADEMO A nice megademo!
PD012 AURORA MEGADEMO Dramatic intro , etc!+
PD013 BASS MEGADEMO Good with house music!
PD014 BOB CRAZY Disk full of Bob demos!
PD015 BRONX WHAT A RUSH Quite a nice demo!+
PD016 BUDBRAIN II Hilarious megademo ! +
PD017 CASCADE MEGADEMO A Puzzle & acid part!
PD018 CHAOS ROCK Fab light show with fractals!+
PD019 COOL FRIDGE A plasma megademo!!!
PD020 CRIONICS MEGADEMO maddona demo & more
PD021 CRIONICS NEVERWHERE Real world demo
PD022 CRIONICS TOTAL DESTRUCTION Super disk!
PD023/25 ALCATRAZ MEGADEMO Huge, on 3 disks!+
PD026 CRUSADERS SPACE DELERIA Fab music etc!
PD027 RED OCTOBER Filled vector demo!
PD029 DANISH KNOW HOW Classic demo,good!
PD030 DEAD DANCE THRASH Thrash metal & pics!
PD031 DEFJAM PIXEL NATIONS Plasma etc!!
PD032 DEVILS LABYRINTH Fab hires plasma, fab!
PD033 DEVILS NO REALITY multipart demo !+
PD034 DRAGONS MEGADEMO An old classic!
PD037/38 ERPLAND (2) Brill kalidescope patterns+
PD041 FILLET THE FISH Similar to puggs +
PD042 GOLDFIRE OBLIQUE INFINITY Acid style video!
PD043 GOLDFIRE ULTIMATE FX Good megademo! +
PD044 HORIZEN SLEEPING BAG Good vectors!
PD046 IRAQ DEMO Amusing demo with Saddam
PD047 INTUITION MEGADEMO Good acid type!
PD048 KATHARSIS MEGA Polish Xcopy demo!+
PD049/50 KEFRENS MEGADEMO VIII classic.(2)
PD051/52 KGB MEGADEMO (2)vector drummer!
PD055 MAGNETIC FIELDS HYSTERESIS Fab graphics !
PD064 NEWTEK DEMO 3 excellent demo!(2)+
PD066 PHENOMENA ECES light sourced vectors! +
PD067 PHENOMENA INTERSPACE Is time Linear ?
PD068 PHENOMENA ENIGMA Absolutely brilliant! +
PD069 PHENOMENA JOYRIDE Very good demo !
PD076 PLASMUTEX Good plasma & great music +
PD077 PMC ALPHA OMEGA Superb vector demo+
PD078 PUGGS IN SPACE Witty cartoon demo
PD085 REBELS MEGADEMO II An old classic +
PD088 REBELS TRIPLE TROUBLE plasma effects! +
PD090/91 RED SECTOR MEGADEMO (2) good +
PD093 SCOOPEX CHROMIUM Superb demo.+
PD094 SCOOPEX MENTAL HANGOVER A classic+
PD097 SILENTS GLOBAL TRASH Incredible!!+
PD098 SILENTS ICE Brilliant Fx & music!
PD099 SILENTS MEGADEMO Old, but still good!
PD107 TIMEX HYPRA looks like a game!
PD108 TOMSOFT TRIP TO MARS 3D trip to mars!
PD109 TOMSOFT VIRTUAL WORLDS An absolute Epic !
PD113 VANGELIS DEMO Fab music & a color cycling!+
PD114 VECTOR SINKING DEMAND Good vector demo.
PD115 WARFALCONS PURPLE Oldie but goodie! +
PD116 WITH VECTORS TO HEAVEN Quite good demo! +
PD118 X-RAY MEGADEMO in 6 seperate parts!
PD119 REBELS OUTLAND Good demo from them !
PD120 KEFRENS GUARDIAN DRAGON New from Kefrens!
PD121 DIVINA TECHNO FRIGHT Unusual! +
PD123 IB MANGA Nice Japanese style cartoons!
PD124 ANDROMEDA DECAYING PARADISE Good! +
PD125 RAY OF HOPE 2 Great ! good music & graphics!
PD126 LEROY 1 Shining vector Substance & more!+
PD127 BASS SUBLIMINAL VISION Rave music & graphics!
PD129 RAZOR 1911 VOYAGE Very good fx and music
PD130/34 ALCATRAZ ODDESSY Awesome!! Ok on 500+!
PD135/6 CRIONICS HARDWIRED Very impressive demo!!!
PD137 ANGELS EVOLUTION Weird vectors etc!
PD138 SEEING IS BELIEVING Excellent demo & music
PD139 TRACKERS POWER & AGONY Unusual vectors! +
PD140 CELSIUS 23 MORE VECTORS Hundreds ofVectors+
PD141 WILDFIRE MEGADEMO great House & dance music
PD142 FINAL CONFESSION Music & Plasma effects!+
PD143 CAT Silents & Crionics demo for cat club +
PD145 NECRONOMIA Excellent demo, if bit freaky ! +
PD146 DOS Excellent vectors & music demo +
PD147 HARDCORE Anarchy's cool new demo
PD148 CHAMELEON A new vector world demo,
PD149 MAGNETIC DREAMS Excellent new demo
PD150 TSL PARTY WINNERS Music & gfx - Superb
PD151 TERMINATOR 3 Interesting ripoff of the movie
PD152 HUMAN TARGET Wicked Rave/vector demo Get it!
PD153 DEFORMATION with the men from the MTV demo
PD154 GET FROGGED You'll love this, just get it !!
PD155 MULTICA Wicked demo from andromeda Get it !!!
PD156/7 REAL EMPATHY Good Demo & Fab game inc. !
PD158 DIGITAL PUNISHER Very good BlitterZoom Fx
PD159 ANARCHY IN THE KITCHEN Some good FX Fab!+
PD160 ANDROMEDA POINT BLANK Crazy polygon effects
PD161 BRONX MEGADEMO II Several sections to this!
PD162 ALCHEMY MARCHWITH Very good new demo+
PD163 GUARDIAN DRAGON 2 NEW demo from Kefrens
PD164 DESIRE MENACE Good Psycho rave demo +
PD165 DARK DEMON Mega new demo .... get it+
PD166 PALACE LINUS Like the 7Up Ad on TV +
PD167 ANALOG FALLEN Excellent demo +
PD168 MELON DEZIGN 808 A classy new demo
PD169 BIG BANG Excellent spacey-type demo+
PD170 PIECE OF MIND Good 3D vector effects. +
PD171/2 SILENTS EXPOSE(2) Incredible Get it !+
PD173 EXIT MEGADEMO 3 Another very good demo

MUSIC DISKS

PM001 100 GREATEST 64 TUNES 100 fab 64 tunes!+
PM004 ALCATRAZ 'THE POWER're-mix of song by Snap.+
PM005 ALCATRAZ MORE THAN MUSIC A superb disk!+
PM006 ALCATRAZ SOUNDS OF ENERGY 4 house tracks!+
PM007/8/9 AMAZING TUNES II (3)loads of great music!
PM010 AMEGA PARTY WINNERS Four WICKED songs+
PM012 AMIGADEUS CLASSICAL Eine Kleiner etc. +
PM013 ANARCHY CAPTURED IMAGINATION Nice music!+
PM014 BANGING RAVES kickin remix of house
PM016 BEATLES SONIX Nice music +
PM017 BEATMASTER 808 REMIX music disk!
PM018 BEATMASTER I LOVE TECHNOLOGY Rave music+
PM019 BRUNO's MUSIC BOX II Superb jazz funk music +
PM020/21 BRUNOS MUSIC BOX III Jazzfunk. Get it ! +
PM022/23 CLASSICAL MUSIC Bach, Handel etc +
PM026 DEPECHE MODE MUSIC Soundtrackered tunes! +
PM027 D-MOB MUSIC 3 House music remix, good! +
PM030/34 DIGITAL CONCERTs 2-6 Excellent house/dance
PM035 DIGITAL DEBUSSY Great Rob Baxter conversions!+
PM036 DIGITAL DEBUSSY 2 More classic Debussy music!+
PM041 EQUAMANIA II Dance music track & equalisers!
PM047/8 GOLDFIRE CEREBRAL DELIGHTS (2) Nice !+
PM052 KEFRENS JUKEBOX Lovely music & juke box! +
PM053 LSD DONT PANIC Super quality music disk!
PM058 MAG FIELDS CHIP FESTIVAL Full of chip music!+
PM059 MANIACS OF NOISE This is brilliant!+
PM061 NEWTRONS MUSIC BOX Headbanger demo-good+
PM062 PAT MUSIC 1 Lots of ripped tunes!
PM063 PAT MUSIC 2 Lots more tunes!
PM064 PAT MUSIC 3 And yet more tunes!
PM065 PHENOMENA MUSIC DREAMS 1 20 fab songs +
PM069 RAZOR FACE ANOTHER DAY very good !!!
PM070 RHAPSODY IN BLUE tracked by Rob Baxter! 1M
PM071/72 SILENTS BLUES HOUSE (2) Music & game+
PM073 SILENTS FULL POWER House it up music! +
PM074 SOUND OF SILENTS Jut get this its mega!
PM079 TECHNOTRONIX REMIX Good remixes etc.
PM080 THE SOUND OF GNOME 46 great tunes!
PM081 TIMECIRCLE More C64 type music!
PM082a/82b VIVALDI - FOUR SEASONS (2) V.Good !+
PM087/88 HIS MASTERS NOISE by Mahoney & Kaktus
PM090/91 MOZART HORN CONCERTO'S 4 by H.Gannon +
PM092 PIANO TUNES Nine piano songs- good +
PM095 HARDCORE III Techno dance tracks!
PM096 STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN Rendition of the song+
PM100/103 MANIC RAVES II Fantastic rave stuff(4) !
PM104 500 THINGS COMEBACK 4 great rave type tracks+
PM105/6 KEFRENS MEGAMIX Fabulous dance music+
PM112 TECHOMANIA II 8 essential hardcore tunes+
PM113 PROTON GATES OF TIME 6 good pieces of music+
PM114 UPROAR SPLIT BEAVER MIX rave megamix +
PM115a/b CHROME Brilliant music disks !+
PM116 LIONS GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH Very good!
PM117 MUZAK OF THE WORLD original Amiga music! +
PM118 TSP RIPPED MUSIC 1 Some good tracks+
PM119 TSP RIPPED MUSIC 2 MOre of above+
PM120 IDEAL MODE AEROSOL EP Go raving mad +
PM121 NIGHTBREED MUSIC DEMO 8 Rave music demo +
PM122/4 PLAYSID 2 (3) You must get this !!!!! +
PM125 PLAYSID inc.RobHubbard, ManiacsOfNoise +
PM126/9 LSD MUSIC PACK (4)A Excellent music collection+
PM130/2 BACH BRANDENBURG CONCERTOS 1 to 6 +
PM133 DANCE TRANCE Rave tracks played amiga style.
PM134/5 SOUNDS OF SCIENCE (2) Absolutely Brilliant!+
PM136 WICKED HOUSE Superb rave music by origin.
PM137 KEFRENS MEGAMIX II Very good !! dance music +
PM138 EROTICA 6 Mega music ! inc crocketts theme ! +
PM139/40 SPRING MELODIES (2) 9 tracks fron anarchy
PM141 HARDLINE MUSIC 7 groovy synth-style tracks +
PM142 FRACTAL MUSIC Very well presented !! get it!
PM143 FALCONS MUSICBOX 2 Average music disk+
PM144 BOUNCER Remix of the song by Kicks like a mule!
PM145 PARADISE TECHNO POWER Great techno music !
PM146/7 ROLLING Good music on a false workbench!!! (2)
PM148/9 DRUMS & REVERB Exellent synth type music!! (2)
PM150 DESKTOP HARPSICHORD RECITAL Classical +
PM151 INTENSE RAVE VISION A very good rave music !!
PM152 PARADISE: NO BRAIN NO PAIN Good for ravers!! +
PM153 BIZE: KILL DA BABE 6 tracks of rave music!! +
PM154 PULSE Yes, pulsating rave music again!! +
PM155 VINE G-RAVE 5 more good rave tracks!!! +
PM156 VIOLENCE PHONOBOMB Four good tracks +

SLIDESHOWS

PS002 ADVANCE HAM Really stunning !+
PS006 AIRCRAFT SLIDE Pics of fighter aircraft! +
PS009 ASTRONOMY SLIDE very impressive !
PS013 BORN TO BE FREE wild animals +
PS014/15 BUTTERFLIES (2) High quality !+
PS016 C64 ART Lots of old C64 pictures!
PS019 COLOURCYCLES Neat fx ! +
PS024 DESERT ISLAND SLIDE Lots of nice pics! +
PS025/26 DIVINE VISIONS (2) Mythological+
PS030 FRAXION FUTURE VISION fantasy pics+
PS033 GERMAN RAY TRACE Superb See these !+
PS039 INVISIBLE WORLD yuch, bed bugs etc!+
PS043 JOE SLIDE1 Some good handrawn pics!
PS044 JOE SLIDE2 More well drawn pics!
PS045 KELLY S/S Some quality HAM pictures. +
PS052 NAGEL PICTURES Hires pics of girls, +
PS056 NEWTEK DYNAMIC HAM 640x512 4096 color pics+
PS057 NEXT PIXILIUM all done in Dpaint plus some music.
PS062 NW DYNAMIC HAM Nik Williams Superb quality. +
PS063 PENTAGON & DRIFTERS Hi-res B/W fantasy pics!+
PS064 PHOTMONTAGE I S/S on various subjects. +
PS065 PHOTOMONTAGE II Another great slide. +
PS067 RICK PARK'S ART Dpaint hires pics! +
PS069/70 SILENTS/CH 42 (2) This is superb!+
PS072 SUPER HAM CARS This is a must-Mega!+
PS073 SUN CONNECTION Great ray traced pics!
PS074a/b FAB TOBIAS RICHTER Fab quality (2)!
PS078 TRAVELLER SLIDE Impressive Dpaint pics!
PS086 SONIC 5 Superb D-HAM 4096 colour pics+
PS087 ALTERED DECEPTIONS Chris hills super work+
PS088 EVOLUTION SLIDE Excellent educational pics+
PS090 FRACTALGEN Incredible fractals etc +
PS091/2 FRACTAL MOUNTAINS Excellent stuff!+
PS093 VANISH 3D Awesome 3d ray traced +
PS094 INVISIBLE WORLD II Yuk Bedbugs And more !+
PS095 TOTAL CONCEPTS SLIDE Pics of forthcoming CLR+
PS096/97 GALLOWEEN Excellent new slideshow
PS098 NEWTYPE SLIDE Japanese cartoon style
PS099 ARTO IKOLA SLIDES digipics: Cats, ladies +
PS100 ACE & DR BLOOD Good Real 3D pictures! +
PS101 ANALOGUE SLIDE Ray traced space pics +
PS102 ACCESS DESIGN Ray traced space pics +

MUSIC UTILS

PT001 ALGORYTHMS Create weird midi tunes
PT002 ART OF MED Excellent !+
PT004 ASI AUDIO MAGIC 2 good compilation
PT005 CASIO CZ EDITOR 250 patches ! +
PT006 DELUXE MUSIC DATA Midi music
PT007 FUTURE COMPOSER Chip music program!
PT008 GAMES MUSIC CREATOR Music sequencer!
PT009 K1 IFF SAMPLES Fabulous samples +
PT010 JAMCRACKER Handles chip & Samples!
PT011 KAWAI K1 editor for patch changes!
PT012 KAWAI K4 editor as above!
PT013 MED 3.2 Excellent music seq. +
PT014 MED MUSIC DISK As it says !+
PT015 MIDI DISK Various midi stuff +
PT016 NOISETRACKER 4 channel sequencer
PT017 NOISETRACKER EXECUTABLE Create standalones!
PT018 PERFECTSOUND SAMPLER Nice sample editor
PT019 ROLAND D110 + S220 Converter program
PT020 ST-01 - ST-10 Samples--Ring for details
PT021 SOUNDTRACKER 2.6 Excellent, ok plus!+
PT022 SOUNDTRACKER COMPILATION Several versions!
PT024 ST-80 BEAST SAMPLES very nice +
PT025/6/7/8 ST-90-93 SAMPLES DISKS Studio quality+
PT029 YAMAHA DX7 VOICE FILER for DX7 synths!
PT030 YAMAHA DX7 VOICE SORTER for the above !
PT031/2/3 ST-87 - 89 3 disks full !+
PT034/5 ST-97 & 98 More samples !+
PT036 SAMPLE MAKER create synthetic samples
PT037 PROTRACKER 2.2 THE LATEST VERSION!!
PT038 YAMAHA DX100,TX81Z, DX27,DX11 & FB01 editors
PT039 SUPER SOUND 2 Add reverb & Fx to samples+
PT040 OCTAMED V1 8 channel MED sequencer!+
PT041 NOISEPLAYER 4.0 Multitasking module player+
PT042 START IFF SAMPLES Superb ! Get this disk!!!!
PT043/5 HOUSE SAMPLES 3 disks full of house samples!

AMOS PD

APD036 AMOS UPATER Latest updater !!! v1.34 +
APD062 ARCADIA version of breakout game!
APD076 RAINBOW WARRIOR Paint your own copperlists
APD083 AMOS PAINT V3.7 Paint in 2-64 colours.+
APD085 REVERSI + SNAKES & LADDERS 2 games!
APD096 PAIR IT Match the cards to make a pair+
APD103/4 PICK UP A PUZZLE Solve jigsaw puzzles+
APD110 CROSSFIRE Nice game, for the kids !+
APD115 BALLOONACY Bomb the buildings !+
APD130 THE WOODEN BALL A shareware game 1mb
APD137 TILE TRIAL Sliding tile puzzle !
APD148 DEMOLITION MISSION bomber game.1mb
APD176 DATABASE MASTER V2.0 Good database+
APD180/1 DUNGEON DELVER maze game - Good!+
APD182/3 PIXIE KINGDOM exploration game!+
APD229 AMOS MULTIPAINT Amos paint program!+
APD231 AMOK trapped in a strange world 1mg+
APD237 SHAPES Excellent kids game !+
APD257 CASSETTE LABELLER + MIXED SOURCE+
APD271 WIZARDS DOMAIN graphical adventure+
APD284 AMOSAGRAM Nice anagram program.+
APD292 WAR OF THE FOUR graphic adventure game+
APD293 GRAND PRIX SIMULATON Very popular
APD314 BLACKJACK TRAINER blackjack game+!
APD318 BOING Get Herbert back home!+
APD325 HANGMAN V2 Hangman game with editor!
APD329 FRUIT MACHINE Good for the gamblers !+
APD333 AMERICAN FOOTBALL RADIO COACH!+
APD334 SNAKE IN THE GRASS Collect white mushrooms!+
APD340 KARATE WORM Very nice platform game!
APD343 SAVE THE TREES Stop the baddies!+
APD347 NOTEBOOK & SHOPPING LIST Easy to use !+
APD362 SQUAT'S REVENGE Operation wolf type game!+
APD363 FAMILY HISTORY DATABASE Latest version!+
APD367 WEIRD IN EDGEWAYS Circuit board puzzle game
APD373 COMPILER 1.34 UPDATE Amos compiler !+

THE CENTRAL LICENSEWARE REGISTER!

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2 disks .. 4.50. +
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2 disks 4.50. +
CLE03 TOTAL CONCEPTS SOLAR SYSTEM:This huge 3 disk set gives a guided tour of the Solar system. Superb!!
3 disks. 4.99. +
CLE04 KIDDIES COLOURING PAD:Nice colouring pad for children, very easy to use, saves in IFF format
1 disk. 3.50. +
CLE05 A-CHORD: Learn to play the guitar quickly and easily hear the chords through the Amigas sound chip!
1 disk. 3.50. +
CLE06 TAMI:Make maths simple with this program!!
1 disk. 3.50. +
CLE07 TOTAL CONCEPTS FRESHWATER FISHING:An exellent guide to a very popular British pastime!!
2 disks. 4.50. +
CLE08 NIGHT SKY: Nice Astronomy program, view the sky from any position and time!+
1 disk 3.50. +
CLE09 WORDS & LADDERS Good educational game, find the word & climb the ladders, with speech!
1 disk 3.50! +

UTILITIES:

CLU01 VIDEO TITLER:Allows you to create scrolling video titles, works with or without a genlock!
1 disk. 3.50. +
CLU02 FISH INDEXER:Find obscure programs with the minimum of fuss with this database!
1 disk. 3.50. +
CLU03 TYPING TUTOR:A program for the budding secretary, for all ages!
1 disk. 3.50. +
CLU04 ALPHA GRAPH: Pie Bar & many other charts all easy with this superb program!
1 disk. 3.50. +
CLU06 SUPERSOUND V3: The best version of this amazing program, add reverb and many other super effects!
1 disk 3.50.+
CLU07 PHILO A card system database with up to 260 fields!
1 disk 3.50+

GAMES:

CLG01 NORRIS: A medievil romp across many levels of gameplay! looks quite addictive!
1 disk. 3.50.
CLG02 DARK THINGS: Another scrolly run & jump type platform game,
1 disk. 3.50. +
CLG03 PHASE II: This is a sideways scrolling shoot em up game, quite good!
1 disk. 3.50. +
CLG04 X-SYSTEM: Multilevel shoot up, blast the end of level monsters on each level!
1 disk. 3.50.+
CLG05 TRUCKIN ON:Exellent truck driving simulation game, 2 disks and needs 2 drives!
2 disks. 4.50. +
CLG06 OBLITERATION:A Furious arcade action game, blast your way through the rocks! Get it (Not Dos 2)
1 disk. 3.50.
CLG08 DRAGON TILES:Exellent puzzle game, much better than the PD version!
1 disk. 3.50. +
CLG09 MOTOR DUAL:This is a 3d car racing game which is much improved over PD game! Link 2 computers too!
1 disk. 3.50. +
CLG10 FUTURE SHOCK Guide the ball through the maze!
1 disk 3.50! +
CLG11 ALL GUNS BLAZING An overhead view car racing game, one or two players!
1 disk 3.50 +
CLG12 BULLDOZER BOB This is a very nice sliding block puzzle game! +
CLG13 PARADOX This is another of those popular block puzzle games!!
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LOOK OUT FOR MORE SUPER CLR TITLES!

NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW!!

CLASSIC CLIPART

The clipart in this collection is very high quality, huge bitmaps, many greater than an Amiga hires screen, for use in Dpaint or DTP packages, each disk autoboots as a slideshow allowing you to view the entire bitmap by moving the mouse! (Prices per disk!)

ART01 WEDDINGS Superb wedding clipart, 2 disks!+
ART02 HOUSES 3 disks, pictures of mansions etc!+
ART03 RELIGIOUS 3 disks full of holy clipart!+
ART04 WWI AIRCRAFT 1 disk of World war II planes!+
ART05 MEN 2 disks full of men at work!+
ART06 WOMEN 2 disks full of women clips!+
ART07 KIDS 2 disks containing kids clipart!+
ART08 BUSINESS Disk full of office clipart!+
ART09 OFFICE Another office type disk!+
ART10 STUDENTS Lots of student type pics!+
ART11 SALETIME Many useful logos etc!+
ART12 XMAS 3 disks of Xmas related pics!+
ART13 PUNCH 3 disks of cartoon pics! +
ART14 ANIMALS Fantastic quality pictures!+
ART15 CATS Only 12 pics but super quality!+
ART16 SILHOUETTES 18 super silhouettes!+
ART17 SCHOOLS 2 disks of school pictures!+
ART18 BABIES Clipart on a baby theme!+
ART19 SPORT 2 disks full of sport pictures!+
ART20 OLYMPIC Another sport type disk!+
ART21 MEDICAL 2 disks full of medical clipart!+
ART22 SEALIFE Pictures from the Ocean!+
ART23 DECORATIVE MONTHS Pic for every month!+
ART24 WACKY Funny comic type clipart!+
ART25 HOLIDAYS Holiday type pictures!+
ART26 BANNERS 2 disks full of banners!+
ART27 ART NOUVEAU FLOWERS Floral art!+
ART28 BUTTERFLIES Nice pictures!+
ART29 FOOD 2 disks on a food/kitchen theme!+
ART30 COLOURING BOOK Colour in Dpaint!+
ART31 BORDERS 2 disks, must load into DTP!+
ART32 MAC CLIP 2 disks high quality macart!+
ART33 HORNBACK Nice scenic clipart!+
ART34 TEDDY BEARS 2 disks of Teddy bears!+
ART35 VANITY FARE 2 disks fashion clipart!+
ART36 HALLOWEEN CLIPART Wierd clipart!+
ART37 SHOWTIME Dancing, singing etc!+
ART38 VEGGIES Vegetarian clipart!+
ART39 FLORAL 14 very detailed pictures!+
ART40 MYTHS 12 superb mythical clips!+
ART41 DOG WOODCUTS Super 300dpi pics!+
ART42 CAT WOODCUTS Great wildcat pics!+
ART43 AFRICAN WOODCUTS African animals!+
ART44 AMERICAN WOODCUTS More animals!+
ART45 ARTIC WOODCUTS Northern animals!+
ART46 FARM WOODCUTS Farm animals!+
ART47 MIXED ANIMAL WOODCUTS Nice pics!+
ART48 BIRDS WOODCUTS 18th century bird pics!+

NEW TITLES

PU228 PROBABLY RIPPER Create disks easily with this!+
PU229 JPEG 24 bit graphics compression utility disk! +
PU230 MORE PRINTER DRIVERS Yes new printer drivers!+
PU231/5 PAGESTREAM FONTS 5 disks of super fonts!+ (5)
PU236/7 SCOPE197/8 Adobe type fonts, 2 disks full! +
PU238/9 M.O.R.C. Mouse operated rune caster,oracle !+
PU240 FREECOPY V1.4 A powerful disk copying program! +
PU241 CALORIE BASE Useful for people on a diet!+
PU242 TEXTPLUS PROFESSIONAL 4 needs hard drive!+
PU243 ASPICE Circuit analysis program!+
PU244 BON APPETIT This is a recipe database program! +
PU245/256 C MANUAL Latest version on 12 disks!!!! (12) +
PG189 SPACE RESCUE Super scramble like shoot em up!+
PG190 TOP SECRET An exellent quality platform game!+
PG191 ACT OF WAR New space strategy game! +
PG192 CYBERNETIX Fab shoot up! (state your machine)+
PG193 MASHIE NIBLICK Yes, a golf game for your Amiga!+
PG194 INTRUDER ALERT Very good strategy game!
PG195 KLAKTRIS Superb Klax/tetris type combination!!!+
PG196 MASH THE POTATO Strange game written in Amos+
PS103 DYNAMIC HIRES 2, 4 fantastic quality pictures!+
PS104 VGA PICS Some exellent quality pictures here!+
PS105 SCAN PICS Exellent quality pictures!+
PD174 ANARCHY DEJA VU Some more superb effects!
PD175 REFLECT SOUND VISION Super effects & music!

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Probably the best collection of PD games available, a large proporion of which are compatible with the A500+/600 machines! Keep the whole family amused for ages!

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Superb collection of games all of which will run on A500/600 machines! Tons of fun!!

GRAMMERS : Have you written a good game, utility or educational program ? Why not send it in for evaluation ? If it's y good, you could soon be earning BIG money !

D FOR A CATALOGUE: In it you'll find we stock Fred Fish disks 1 - 720 (plus more as they arrive), Amos PD, Amigos, og, Scope and other popular libraries. If you dont see the program you want in this Advert PLEASE CALL US ! We can st guarantee we will have it !

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Stand by for action. It's that time of the month again, when we get to grips with the harder side of Amiga computing. For all of you who do more than simply load up someone else's software let's...

GET SERIOUS



The top rated accolade is for non-games products scoring over 90%. They will definitely be worth the money and are likely to act as a benchmark for future releases.

GALLERY

For a database with a difference, read on...

If you're looking for a database, but want something more than just a text filing system, Helios just may have the answer with *Gallery*, a 'multi-media' database capable of storing graphics and sound with its files. Boot up, and you're greeted with a close relative of the Antiques Roadshow theme tune. One swift mouse click later, and up comes the main program.

Records are treated in the traditional fashion, with user-definable labels, headings and info boxes, and can be sorted alphabetically. Where it differs from a conventional text database, is that



Gallery has a completely icon-driven user interface.

THE DEMO COLLECTION

CDTV has been poorly supported so far. But, with the potential that it offers it won't be long before more titles like this spring up.

Since CD-ROM has at last become a reality for Amiga owners, a whole new world of possibilities has opened up. So far, CDTV releases have only scratched the surface of the potential of CD drives, but with *The Demo Collection*, Almathera Systems are at least putting the technology to a more practical use than most.

Although in theory, PD software is free, getting hold of 1000 music modules, 32 megabytes of clip art, 70 animations, untold games, Postscript and bitmapped fonts, demos of commercial programs and games, utilities, sound samples and a host of other miscellaneous bits and pieces, would take a king's ransom, not to mention an unfeasibly large cupboard to keep all the disks in. That is, unless you get hold of *The Demo Collection*, which holds all that lot on a single CD.

Despite the disk's title, there's only one actual PD demo. Boot the disk, and you're given a choice between running the demo, or accessing the rest of the CD through Workbench. Take the first option, and you get a version of the *Amazing Tunes* music demo. The difference is that the tracks have been

each record can be comprised of text, an IFF screen, and an IFF sound sample. Once you've set up your fields, you can then go about entering textual details. Any extra notes can be included on an optional second page. Tagging a graphic screen or sample onto a record, is simply a matter of defining the filename of the picture or sound, and the directory in which it can be found.

While *Gallery* is all mouse operated (apart from text entry), it uses a customised interface that's not the most intuitive around. File requesters are frustratingly immovable, the icons are somewhat inconsistent, and there's not a pull-down menu in sight. Nevertheless, it all works well enough once you've got the hang of it.

One of the program's most useful features is the slideshow creator. This uses a database of picture, text and sound files, and simply flips through them in order, whilst playing the corresponding sample a few times. Unfortunately, the resulting sequences cannot be run independently of the database, so it's no use for compiling PD slideshow demos. While it's pretty simplistic, the slideshow feature could be used effectively for modest tutorial projects, but it's not really up to the standards demanded by business presentations.

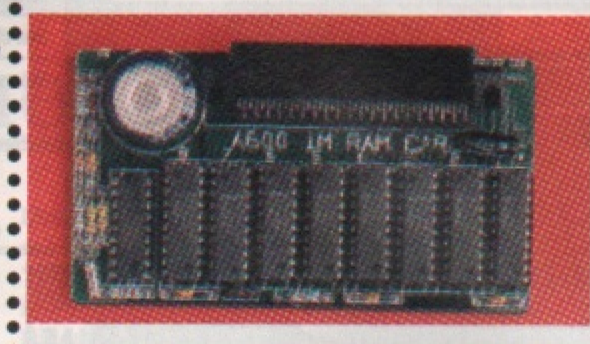
Gallery looks and feels more like a PD release than a piece of commercial software. It's not that it's been particularly badly designed or programmed, but for £59.95, I'd expect a rather more versatile, user-friendly product.

For further information, contact: Helios Software Design, 163 Huthwaite Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts, NG17 2HB. Tel: 0623 554828

60%

PHOENIX RAM

Third party expansions for the A600 are hard to come by. However, RAM expansions are now beginning to boom, we look at one of the best.



Nobody was more surprised when the A600 was released, than all of the third party developers who discovered that the expansion connectors had changed. This effects not only the hard drives and what have you that would normally go on the DMA expansion slot, but also anything that plugs into the trapdoor slot.

The slot connector has changed to a subminiature version of the same thing which not only makes things a little more difficult for those of you who like playing with soldering irons, but also means that the old-style RAM expansions have become redundant.

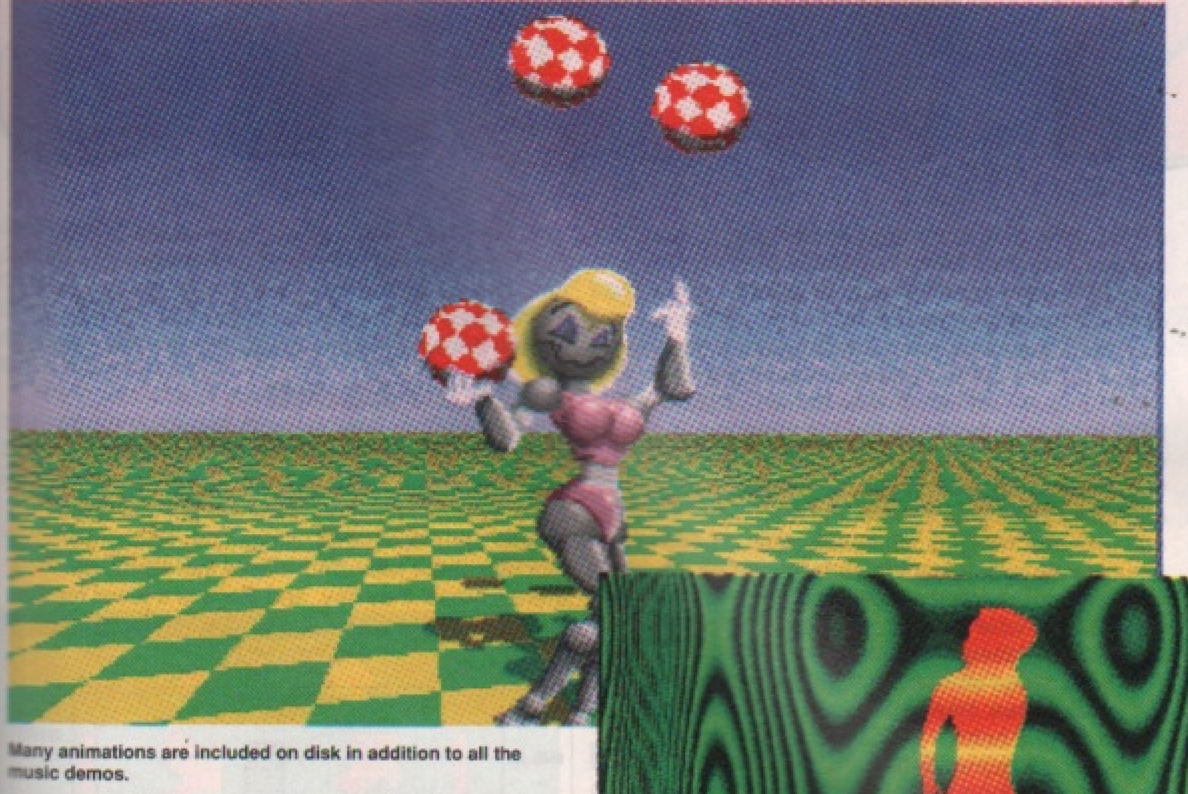
Although the A600 has 1Mb of RAM already, you could always do with a bit more. A lot of serious software requires more than 1Mb and many games are enhanced with extra memory, so there's almost as much reason for an A600 owner to expand as there is for an A500 owner. That being the case there are many RAM expansions emerging for the A600, and one of those is the Phoenix card.

Organised around eight 256k RAM chips, the card is little bigger than the space required for the memory and hardly fills any space in the slot. There is no clock, because of course the clock is internal on the A600 already.

The card is slightly more expensive than a similar card for the A500 but prices are sure to drop once demand picks up. At £49.99 for the 1Mb version it's still not that much more expensive than a decent game and it's well worth it if you use your Amiga for music or looking at demos.The expansion is available in unpopulated and half populated models too, at £29.99 and £39.99 respectively.

RAM expansions are very much a sort of 'fire-and-forget' technology – once they're in there you need never see them again. The only real test of a Ram expansion is its reliability, and since they won't normally fail for a couple of months it is impossible to say how the Phoenix will perform, but it seems to be well constructed on a double-sided board so there should be no problems. if you supply your own RAM chips then it's very much down to you. **Contact: First Computer Centre. Tel: 0532 319444**

81%



Many animations are included on disk in addition to all the music demos.

changed, with an enormous selection of 'ripped' tunes in their place. Unfortunately, they're not quite as amazing as those of the original demo. In fact, most of them are quite ordinary synth tracks. That's fine if you like that sort of thing, but some variety would have gone down well. There are a few attempts at house and acid (not a hint of rave), but just when they're getting good, they've got a habit of slipping back into yawn-inducing twee melodies. Still, even if you don't like the music, by loading them into *Protracker* (also on the CD) you can save out all the samples individually for use in your own compositions.

Quitting from the demo takes you to Workbench, from where you can get at all the rest of the goodies. Thrill-seekers will probably head for the animations drawer next. Variety isn't a problem here. Among the 70 animations are 3D fractal flights, ray-traced scenes from Chessboard land, around 11 space sagas from Tobias Richter, 20 cartoons by Eric Schwartz, and an assortment of various other mini-movies. There are some real gems here, but unfortunately, most of them won't run on a 1 Mb CDTV, because they're just too big.

Onto the games, and we're offered a vast selection, ranging from puzzles, through pool, to *Space Invaders*, here in the form of *Amoeba Invaders*. Previews of commercial games and serious software are also executable from here. Venture into the CLI, and you've access to a sprinkling of programming utilities.

All this lot for £19.95 represents an enormous saving over buying PD on floppies. Even if you only used half of the stuff on here, you'd have enough to keep you going for a quite a few weeks.

For further info, contact: Almathera Systems Ltd., Challenge House, 616 Mitcham Road, Croydon, CR9 3AU. Tel: 081 683 6418



Soundtracker modules are played back through a custom interface complete with strobe effects and a Pan's Person dancing away to get you in the mood.

Spell 2.0 (92.04.27)

with the Welsh Police and the Halle Orchestra, and proceed to sing a love song which allows Doctor Indira MacNaughton just enough time to cross the Alps into Geneva, where he meets Kon Rapp, a Kung-Fu fanatic and cat lover, who frivously shoots him, but not before introducing him to lively intelligent Norwegian widow Lanny Krimpt, who shows him her inner thighs where he finds the address of a good French restaurant and unexpectedly meets Grabriella Machismo, an ex-Korean plastic

Ram Disk

Store

Check Document

Kung

Not found

Accept Learn Guess

Quit

New Shell process 3
3.Boot:>

DH1:Financial Statement.ADV

Ward Enterprises PLC
Financial Statement

Year	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Revenues	£5000.00	£5250.00	£6000.00	£6700.00	£6200.00
Cost of Goods Sold	£3300.00	£3500.00	£3500.00	£4000.00	£4200.00
Gross Profit	£1700.00	£1750.00	£2500.00	£2700.00	£2000.00
General Expenses	£100.00	£120.00	£150.00	£200.00	£180.00
Operating Profit	£1600.00	£1630.00	£2350.00	£2500.00	£1820.00
Interest Expense	£15.00	£18.00	£25.00	£25.00	£18.00
Retained Earnings	£1585.00	£1612.00	£2325.00	£2475.00	£1802.00

The 'Calc' spreadsheet – exciting isn't it?!

David Ward gets integrated with the latest in office automation.

Gold Disk's

WORKING LATE

Most integrated office packages consist of a word-processor, spreadsheet with graphics capabilities, and a database. One that does not is Gold Disk's *Office 2*. Gold Disk has substituted the traditional wordprocessor for an advanced text editor, a DTP program, and a separate spell checker.

Now this is not a new package, in fact it has been around for some time, but has recently been revamped to take advantage of Workbench 2.0. The individual components are versions of existing Gold Disk products.

This is software with no bells and whistles, yet such simplicity belies a depth to each program that only becomes clear after reading the manual. There are more than 350 pages of tutorials, reference sections, and appendices to guide the user.

Do not be put off. The programs all follow a logical pattern and are easy to get into when first starting out.

The text editor, *Office Write*, lets you work on as many multiple documents as your computer's memory allows. There is no apparent loss in performance with this feature, and text display is fast enough for the most competent typist.

When launched from its icon, *Office Write* opens on a custom screen. If summoned from the Shell, it will open a window on Workbench. The program's start-up features can be altered by customising the icon with ToolTypes, or adding options to the Shell command.

A full range of editing functions are provided along with methods for marking text. These 'bookmarks' can be used for rapid movement, by jumping around a document, in addition to the cursor keys and keyboard short-cuts. Alternatively, you can use the slider bar. This is a remarkable device. Instead of the more usual vertical slider for moving to and fro, the *Office Write* one is horizontal.

On-screen text can only be shown as plain, bold, italic, or underlined. For the more exotic print-outs you must embed escape commands in the text. Formatting commands can also be inserted to control justification, headers and footers, widows and orphans, margins, and page sizes. These are a bit unwieldy to use, but their effects can be viewed with the print preview option. This gives you an idea of what your document will look like on print-out, without having to waste paper.

There is one other command that marks text: the index option. Here words can be highlighted, at the touch of a button, for incorporation into an alphabetically sorted list.

Spell must be run before any checking can take place. The dictionary is copied to RAM, and runs very quickly. It's American – what did you expect of a Canadian company – and is capable of producing a frequency table of the words in a document.

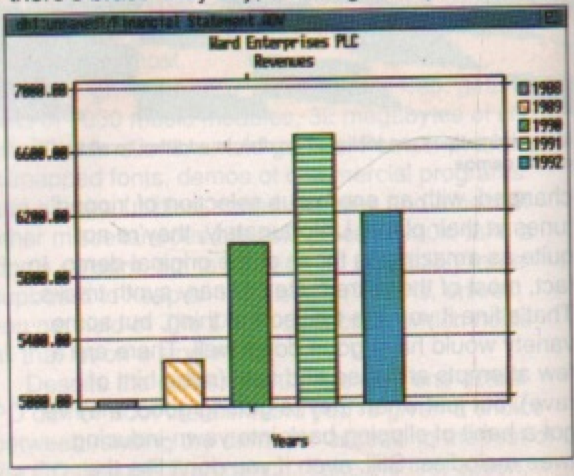
This can be saved to disk for later analysis. A user dictionary can be constructed, along with an exception table. Here you can instruct *Spell* to reject spellings like 'color' and other Americanisms.

Powerful macros can be formed from keystrokes and menu commands. These are recorded by the software and can be named and saved for subsequent use.

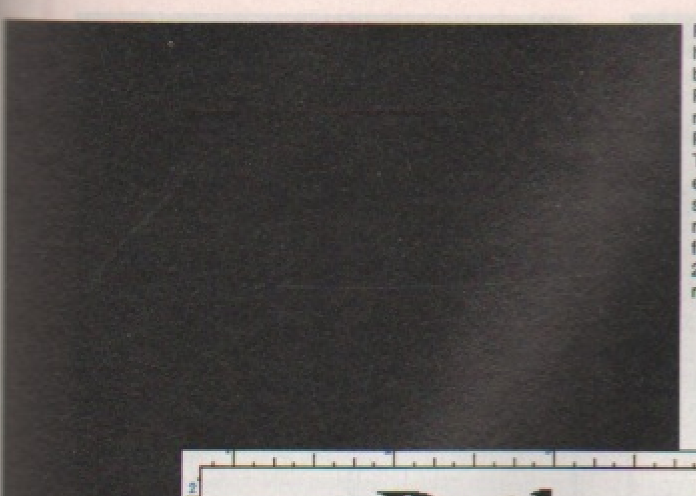
Instead of being supplied with an all-singing, all-dancing graphical WP, Gold Disk encourage you to get into the world of DTP via *Office Page*. Here all those fancy fonts, graphics, and even columns, can be thrown together for a better printed output.

OFFICE PAGING

Office Page falls somewhere between Gold Disk's other two DTP programs, *PageSetter II* and *ProPage*. It has some features common to both, but not all. Text and graphics are put into boxes, moved around, resized, clipped, and generally mucked about with. And 'where there's muck there's brass' they say, and *Page* is a jewel for the

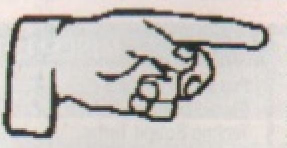


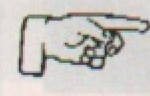
The purpose of *Graph* is to generate charts for use in monochrome printed documents, so don't expect 4096 colours!



Page is a halfway house, somewhere between PagesetterII and the more expensive Professional Page. The cut and paste ease of Pagesetter survives, but in a new and user-friendly Workbench 2.0-look environment.

Page has text handling tools far superior to those funny combination word-processor cum DTP packages that are floating around these days. Take typographical control and adjust linespacing, text size, justification andshades.

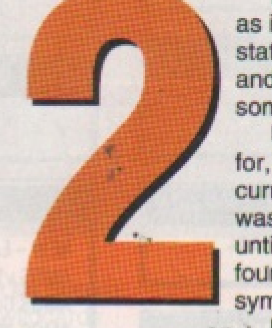




Bitmap and structured art can be imported into *Page* or you can drawsimple shapes with the structured tools provided. If you don't have a copy of ProDraw it is worth looking out for some PD clip-art.

The ability to use Outline Compugraphic fonts and control them to within a fraction of a point size means that nobody could tell if your document originated on an Amiga or on a top-flight NexT.

Office 2



production of eye-catching documents. Text can be pasted into boxes in a variety of fonts and justifications. It can be flowed round other boxes, boldened, and given drop shadow effects. Outlined fonts can be similarly treated, and filled with a pattern if necessary.

Along with the structured drawing tools that are available, both bitmap graphics and *Professional Draw* clips can be imported into a document for illustrative purposes.

Page imports files produced in *Write*, ASCII, *WordPerfect* (PC & Amiga), *Scribble*, and *TextCraft*. *Write* can be used in conjunction with *Page* at the same time to provide quick text editing facilities. Such text is ported between the two packages without the need to save to disk – one of the advantages of a multi-tasking computer.

Write itself will load a variety of other WP formats, with the exception of *KindWords* and *WordPerfect*. This last one is peculiar, as *Page* can load it!

Output is to dot matrix or PostScript printers. With the former, several dither patterns can be selected from if you are printing grey scale. With PostScript you can change the halftone screen angle – a significant feature if some of your imported graphics are from a scanner.

I would recommend potential users of *Office* to get hold of some PD clipart, as none is supplied in the four disk set. Being clipartless will severely constrain your DTP'ing. You have been warned!

A picture is worth a 1000 words, and that is what it would take just to describe the data interchange between the *Office* packages.

HARD GRAPHED

Office Calc and *Office Graph* look very similar to one another, but they perform different functions. Each program has been derived from a common ancestor – *ProCalc*.

Calc is a spreadsheet that conforms to the standard row and column layout. These are labelled numerically and alphabetically respectively, so the top left hand box, or cell, is called A1, its neighbour B1 and so on.

Each cell can contain either a comment, a value, or a formula. Cell widths are adjustable so that they can be wide for large values, or narrow for aesthetic purposes, e.g. separating columns of figures.

Formulae can range from simple A1+B1 as in general maths, to the more complex statistical, financial, boolean, index, time, and trigonometric functions. There are even some that apply to colours and style.

Up to 14 decimal places can be asked for, should you wish it, with scientific and currency notation also available. This last was in dollars as expected, and it was not until the last few pages of the manual that I found out how to alter this to our currency symbol.

Rows and columns can be cut and pasted, justified, moved, and deleted. More than one sheet can be opened and worked on at any time, so items can be moved between them.

A view option is available from the menu bar that allows the user to examine another part of the current spreadsheet without moving from the current position.

Calc has similar macro facilities to *Write*, but also supports Arexx. Scripts can be attached to individual cells and activated by clicking upon them. Other spreadsheet formats supported are industry standard *Lotus 1-2-3*, and *Maxiplan*, but *Graph* will only import a *Calc* file.

Despite its similarities, such as editing and notation functions, *Graph* will not calculate changed values. It will accept numbers directly, so you can create simple graphs from off the cuff data without having to resort to *Calc* first.

There are three basic types of graph to choose from, with variations on a theme to give a total of 10 in all. The pie chart can be 3D, but the other line and bar graphs are plain 2D, with limited colouring.

Pies can be exploded, legends can be created, and bars can be stacked, but I think you'll find the results are unimpressive. This is not due to any lack of imagination on the programmer's part, it is just that the results are designed to be incorporated into monochrome documents. *Graph* is not a business presentation package. Charts can be saved out as IFFs, *Professional Draw* clips, or in *Aegis Draw Plus* structured drawing formats. All three can be loaded by *Page*.

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Fun School 2 – 8 programs per pack

Fun School 2	under 6	£6.95
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All Fun School programs will work with a standard 512k Amiga and the new A500 Plus.

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Includes 750 General Knowledge questions & a game reward ... £14.95

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Primary Maths Course (3-12)	£18.95
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NEW - MEET ADI!
ADI is a friendly alien being that appears on this latest range of educational software from Europress (the manufacturers of the Fun School range). Each package is specifically designed to follow the National Curriculum for a particular school year.

ENGLISH 11/12: Features pronouns, verbs, adverbs, spelling, synonyms and prefixes/suffixes. **MJC Price** £17.95

ENGLISH 12/13: Using dictionaries and reference books, construct adverbs, punctuate sentences. **MJC Price** £17.95

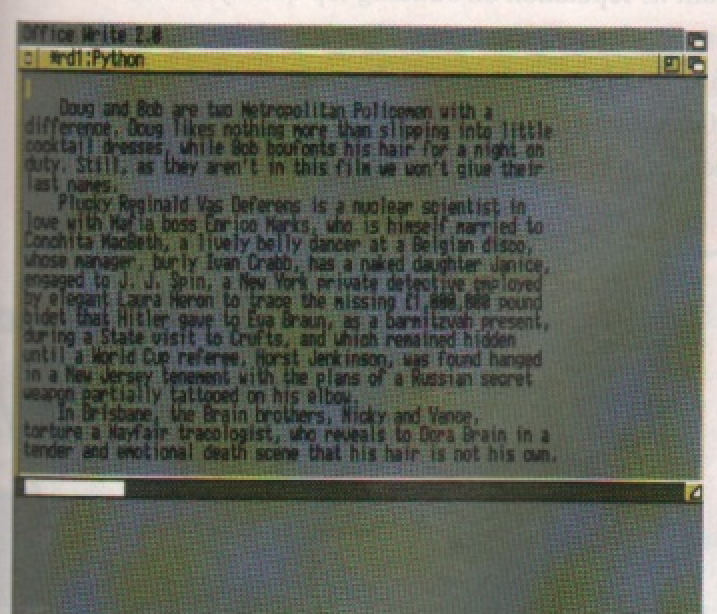
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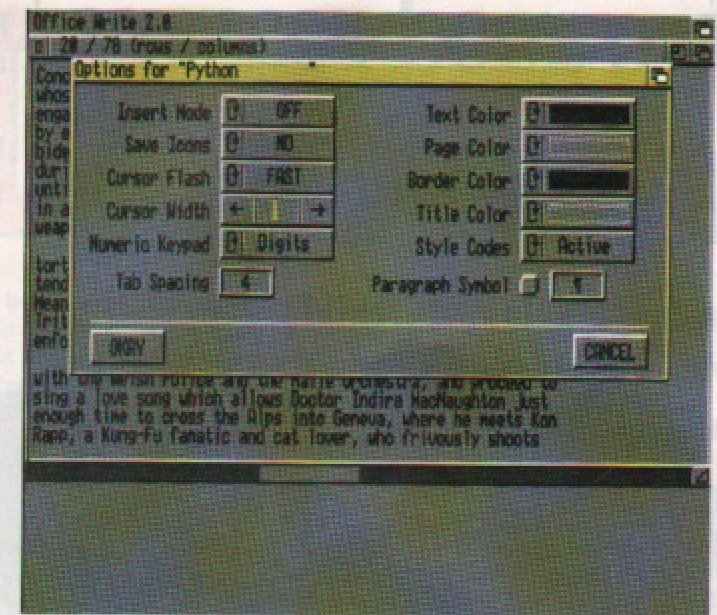


Remember – prices include VAT & delivery

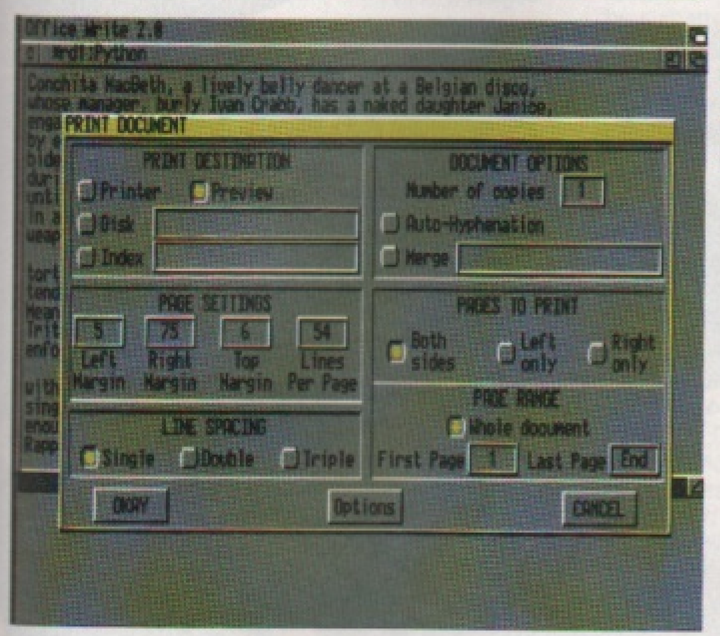




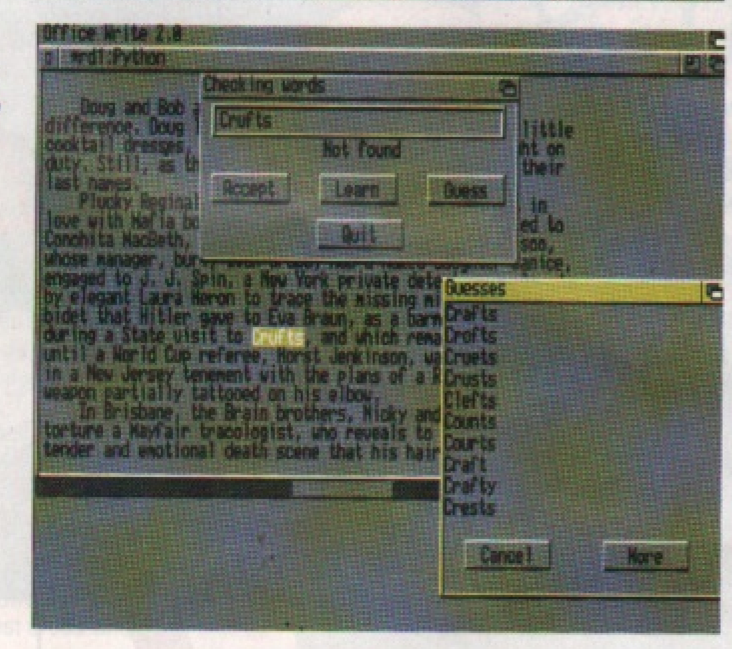
Designed for quick text input, *Write* does not need many of the fancy features of graphical word-processors.



Write has numerous user-defined options like cursor size and colouring, but there is no timed save facility.



Documents can be sent to the printer, the preview facility, or disk. Indexes are handled via the print requester too.



The spell checker has no Ignore All option, and will suggest too many words if allowed. Luckily you can directly edit an offending word yourself.

BACK AT BASE

Finally we come to the *File* program. This is a flat file database which appears like a spreadsheet with rows of data, and the columns headed by the data fields. Like *Calc* the work area is going to be larger than the screen so scrolling is necessary.

There is an alternative to the browse mode of operation. *File* can be used like a card-based system, with just the information on one 'card' visible at a time. To move through the database you have to flip the cards with the cursor keys.

Unlike any of the other programs, there is no example to load into the database. This was disappointing as it would have been nice to see how a database is laid out, especially if this was your first encounter with one, without having to jump straight in at the deep end.

The tutorial teaches you how to set up a telephone and address book template, but does not go into great detail. This is a pity because *File* is a very powerful database.

Not only will it handle text and numbers, but also time, dates, currency, and logic fields. Numeric values can be worked on by a 'quick calc' function from the menu bar, or even by using formulae similar to those of the spreadsheet.

Sorting is called 'indexing'. This allows you to specify the order in which fields will be alphabetically sorted. More than one index can be created for each database, and they are saved with the database to disk.

The entire database is not stored in memory, only the portion you are currently working on. This means there is constant disk access. The size of the saved file is dependant on the size of the fields and the amount of data you have.

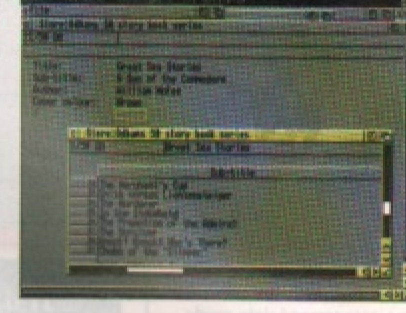
Searching through the records can be accomplished in conjunction with filters and wildcards. The '?' for single characters, and the '*' for multiples give endless possibilities when you are sifting information.

Filters can aid you in your quest by limiting the amount of data to be searched. You could specify that only Smith surnames are looked at when searching for Frank and Francis (Fran*).

The resulting data can then be saved as a set for use in the mail merge of *Write*. The records themselves are not saved, only the pointers to those records.

File has an Arexx port and a set of instructions that can be carried out by this language. It can automatically redefine data fields too. If you find that one of your data fields is too small for a particular record, you can resize it and *File* will alter the old database to fit the new format. This is something other databases cannot do.

This review has only skimmed the surface of *Office*, but it should have given you an idea of how potent these little programs can be when used together. The sum of the parts is greater than the whole, and that goes for the price too.



File can be used like a card index, or in a 'spreadsheet' format.

OFFICE 2 . . . at a glance

• Budget DTP • Powerful database • Competent spreadsheet • Simple graphics • Handy text editor • Solid programming • Arexx/Macros • Full data interchangeability

Address:
Gold Disk's Office 2 is available from HB Marketing, Unit 3, Poyle 14, Colnbrook, Slough SL3 0DY. Telephone: 0753 686000

HB MARKETING £129.99

'Potent little programs when used together...'

EASE OF USE	74%
VALUE FOR MONEY	94%
EFFECTIVENESS	82%
FLEXIBILITY	74%
INNOVATION	67%
OVERALL	**80%**

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CROSS DOS 5.0

Nick Veitch defects to the land of MS-DOS – or is he only mucking around?

DOSSING IT

It doesn't really matter what you use your Amiga for, sooner or later you're bound to come across a problem. Not your parents fighting for control of the T.V. remote control, not the fact that you use your computer so much you can't wake up in the mornings (although these are serious problems) but the fact that to more than half the world the word 'computer' means IBM PC.

The trouble is that because so many people use these machines, there is rather a lot of software devoted to them. Not only a lot of machine specific software, but a lot of data as well. If you want to use large numbers of Adobe fonts, the only place you are going to get them is from a PC. If you want to output postscript files, you are going to have difficulty getting anyone to print them unless you put them on a PC disk. If you want graphics, sound or any other useful data, you'll find that it's available first in MS-DOS format. Not only that, but many people work in offices with archaic practises, including unpaid overtime, and... the dreaded IBM. Many people would like to take their work home, but can't because they have bought themselves a sensible computer like the Amiga.

DUAL FORMAT

Their isn't much difference between an Amiga drive and a PC drive. In fact, there is no significant difference at all between the actual drive units, only the way in which the data on the drives is accessed.

A standard PC disk (i.e. double sided double density) uses nine sectors to store its data, giving a total of 720k over the whole disk. The AmigaDOS system works off 11 sectors, allowing it to store up to 880k, but making it completely incompatible with a PC disk.

CrossDOS works by setting up an alternative device, called PC0: (or PC1: for an external drive), which routes through a different file handler and device handler. Although it is the same as the normal floppy drive, the Amiga now sees the floppy drive as being two separate devices, one a PC drive, the other a standard Amiga drive.

THINGS THAT MAKE YOU BAD

Because of this, when you insert a normal Amiga floppy into the drive, PC0:, it won't recognise the disk as being PC. This results in the standard Workbench response of displaying an icon, the device name and a series of question marks indicating that the disk cannot be accessed. Well, of course it can't be accessed by the PC device, but the icon will appear as usual as an Amiga disk.

The same thing happens the other way around too. If a PC disk is inserted into the drive, the Amiga handler will think it's a bad disk, and will display it on the Workbench as such. For this reason it's a good idea to give your PC disks distinctive icons which will be displayed on Workbench once the disk is inserted, avoiding any confusion over whether it is a valid disk or not.

Apart from that the system is completely transparent – you can use PC disks in just the same way as you would Amiga disks. You can copy files across, run *SID* or another directory utility and even save files directly from within Amiga applications. The PC drive is considered just as much a normal device as all the others.

CONCLUSION

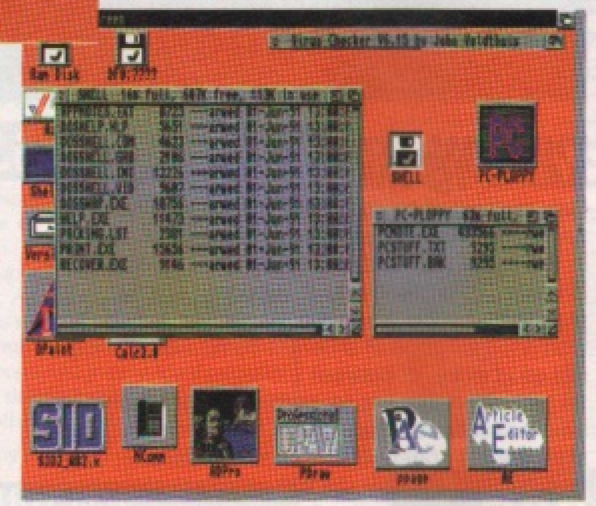
The system is simple to install as it comes with an automatic hard disk installer program so you simply click on the icon and everything is done for you. The system will work on a floppy based system, but you will need more than one floppy drive to use it effectively.

It also seems to be more reliable than many other multi-format programs (such as *Dos-2-Dos*, *MultiDos* and *MessyDos*) in that floppies formatted under *CrossDOS* stay formatted, and the disks seem to lead a normal life without corrupting after a couple of uses (well, as normal a life as anything could possibly have in the CU offices).

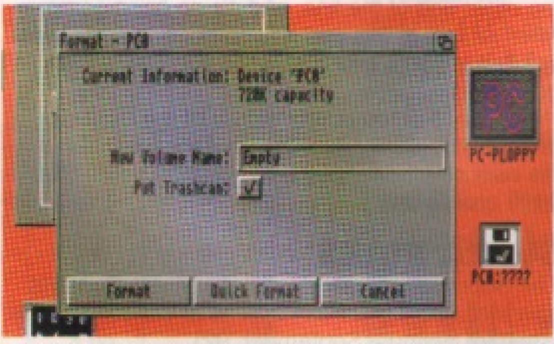
The documentation is fairly extensive although if you really want to know the intimate details of PC software and the way files are stored you are better off getting a copy of MS-DOS and reading through the accompanying manual.

Why take two drivers into your mountlist, when you could just cross and go?

PC disks can be given icons so they stand out on the workbench.



All normal operations under Workbench will be permitted with the PC disks, including viewing files in Workbench windows and copying across disks by simply dragging icons.



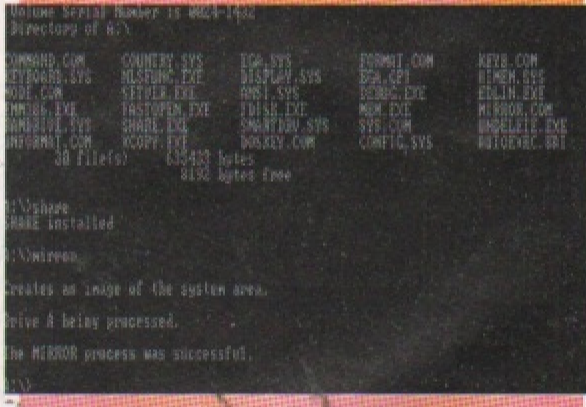
CrossDos comes with some enhanced formatting and copying routines, which work on both Amiga and PC disks.

CROSS PC

Sometimes it isn't enough to be able to just exchange disks, you need to be able to run the software too. Included in *CrossDOS 5* is a small PC emulator called *CrossPC*. The emulator is software only, so it is a bit slow, but nevertheless quite effective. On running, the software works out your system configuration and sets up the PC ports accordingly, so you can use modems and printers via PC software. You do need to provide your own copy of MS-DOS though (*CrossPC* will work with most versions of MS-DOS, including the latest, v5.0).

The screen emulation only stretches to CGA mode, so forget about running any games or graphics software, but it does multitask, so you can swap between screens in the usual way. *Windows* will work, but it works even slower than on a bog standard XT if you can imagine such a thing.

If you are looking for an emulator to run serious PC software, you'd be better off considering the *Vortex ATOnce* or the *KCS* emulator, but if you only want to run a wordprocessor or a simple database then *Cross PC* is more than adequate.



Okay, so it's a bit dull – but that's exactly how PCs are anyway.

CROSS DOS 5.0 ...at a glance

1.3/2.0 compatible • works with all connected floppy drives • dual access to drives • works on hard disk partitions • supports floptical units • integral text translators

Address: HB Marketing, Unit 8, Poyle 14, Coinbrook, Slough SL3 0DY Tel: 0753 686000.

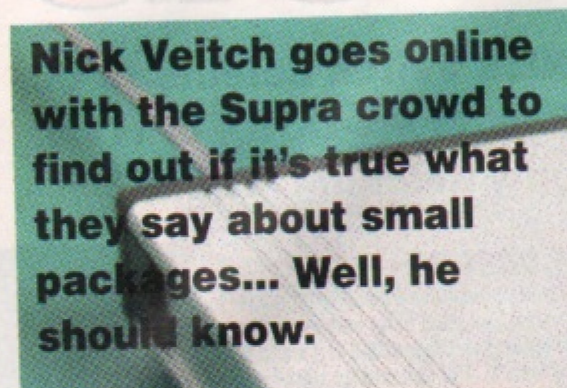
HB MARKETING £39.95

'PC compatibility with peace of mind and ease of use.'

EASE OF USE	86%
VALUE FOR MONEY	74%
EFFECTIVENESS	88%
FLEXIBILITY	76%
INNOVATION	80%
OVERALL	**81%**

SUPRA MODEMS

Nick Veitch goes online with the Supra crowd to find out if it's true what they say about small packages... Well, he should know.



SERIAL KILLERS

For some reason modems seems to have escaped the usual Tower of Babel effect that afflicts most computer peripherals. The modem (short for Modulator Demodulator) is simply an electronic device which adds a carrier wave to binary data to enable it to be sent via an analogue communications system, such as a telephone. More simply it just converts a series of ones and zeroes into beepy noises which go down the phone, much in the same way as older home computers used to store info.

Because the electronics in the modem have absolutely nothing to do with the computer that is using it, and because most computers use the RS232 standard for serial communications it is possible for a modem to be easily switched between machines. This also means that the hardware is non-specific and an external modem which is being sold for an IBM will work just as happily on an Amiga.

THE NEED FOR SPEED

Perhaps the most confusing aspect of buying a modem is trying to work out what speed it goes at. For example, a 2400 baud modem is called a V22. Why modem speeds are defined by seemingly unconnected code numbers is a genuine mystery, but here they are:

V21	300
V22	1200
V22bis	2400
V23	75/1200
V32	9600
V32bis	19200
HST	450/19200

THEY ALL LOOK THE SAME TO ME

One modem, it could be argued, is very much like any other. That is true to a certain extent, but only in the same way that one printer is very much like another. To a great extent, modems are not machine specific, so that a single unit may be used with a large range of different computers (though not all at once, of course).

However, there is more to a modem than just a box with lights on that makes beepy noises. For a start there's speed. Serial communications, unlike parallel data transfer (as with printers) always occur at a predetermined speed. Usually this is the highest possible of both of the two modem units (because obviously there has to be a modem at the other end of the line, and it's no good going twice as fast at this end if the other end can't keep up), but in some circumstances you may want to go slower.

Because of the binary nature of the business, the speeds usually double with each level. Thus the next step from 1200 baud is 2400 baud, then 4800 and so on.

SUPRA STARS

The Supra range has recently been updated and now includes a few Faxmodems at various speeds (see Get Serious, September '92).

The shells of the modems are all similar, based around an aluminium case 15x5x20cm (about the size of a decent paperback book). This is quite a bit smaller than most external modems, but also means the unit is a bit small to stick your telephone on top of.

The front and rear of the units are interchangeable for the different models. The traditional flashing LEDs are missing on the top of the range models and have been replaced by an LED matrix display which alternates displaying two letter codes telling you what is going on. This is quite disconcerting at times, even though there are four little lights to let you know when data is being transferred.

INIT = ATz

All the Supra modems are fully Hayes compatible, which means they conform to the standard protocols set up ages ago. The modems accept as commands all data which is preceded by the command suffix, 'AT', which includes a whole load of commands for configuring your modem. Usually they work perfectly well straight out of the box, but you may need to set-up some initialisation strings via your terminal software (most comms packages are well documented and will include plenty of documentation on how to set-up both your software and your modem).

The modems have a through socket for a telephone but, since they were designed in the U.S.A., you'll need a special lead to attach your own phone. The modem is supplied with a U.S.A. jack-to-BT converter for plugging the unit into one of the now standard BT jack sockets (if you are still using the old wired-in oval connectors then you are in real trouble).

For those in the know the modems also support various levels of MNP error correction (a system for eliminating the random line-noise effects that hamper most ASCII transfers).

CONCLUSION

The Supra modems are compact reliable and very good value for money. Although the units themselves are quite small, don't be fooled – they are every bit as good as those much bulkier and polished efforts.

There were some problems with earlier units when they activated a fallback speed in error, but this has been sorted out and all registered owners will be receiving an update chip free of charge. Obviously Supra are firm believers in customer support which is good to see in this day and age.

SUPRA MODEMS

...at a glance

• Hayes Compatible • works with all Amigas • phone cable supplied • 9v power supply included • external unit

Address: First Computer Centre, Unit 3, Armley Park Court, Cecil Street, Armley, Leeds, LS12 2AE. Tel: 0532 319444

FIRST COMPUTER CENTRE £79.99 - 259.99

'Compact, reliable and very good value for money'

EASE OF USE	86%
VALUE FOR MONEY	76%
EFFECTIVENESS	88%
FLEXIBILITY	80%
INNOVATION	67%
OVERALL	**79%**

RealThings Dogs

It's a dog's life and no mistake. Peter 'Howlin' Lee takes a look at RealThings Dogs and goes barking mad.

Man throws stick – dog fetches stick. Why? What's in it for him?

The Andrex puppy is back and he's as sickeningly cute as ever! Why not combine the Alsatian brushes with this one and have the little pup torn apart?!

HOW TO MAKE LINE ANIMATION FROM LIVE-ACTION ANIMBRUSH

Follow these steps...

1. Load the animbrush into the number of frames it requires.
2. Pick up each cel in turn and make silhouette of it by hitting F2 with a good colour selected.
3. Before printing it down again, etch off one pixel all round with the "Shift-O" command. Then print it back into its frame.
4. Select a dark outline colour, pick up image again and hit "O" to put outline around it.
5. Use "Fill" (hit F) with Right Mouse to fill image with background colour.
6. Add registration mark and cel number to image, then save each in turn as a brush.

NOW HIT 2 TO GO TO NEXT PAGE...

If you've never bought a RealThings collection before, don't worry as full documentation and on-disk help is at hand to guide you through the collection.

COMPUTER PEOPLE

If you're an ex-C64 owner or an older Amiga user, you may remember a sickly cute program called *Little Computer People*. It pre-dated the clutch of modern God-sims, and gave you total control over the life of a small and dense little chap who clomped about his multi-storey house. He answered the phone, went to the loo, and danced like Pee Wee Herman. Okay, he was a nerd – but his saving grace was that he loved his dog. He'd feed and water the little fella on command. I had a sneaking feeling the dog had a higher IQ than my LCP!

Those simple days are gone, but they were awakened by the release of a new series from RealThings, who have turned their magic to man's (and every LCP's) best friend, the dog. Having a panting, bounding dog in harness on the computer screen gives you a great feeling. The animated graphics included in the two-disk set bring nine different breeds of dog to life. Using *DPaint III* or *IV*, there are almost 40 animbrushes to play with and these allow you to create your own moving scenarios with lifelike realism. The animated brushes don't hog many colours, so you can paste down the animals onto your own static backgrounds.



SSSS-SIT

Barbara Woodhouse would have loved *RealThings Dogs* – you can make the critters do everything they're told and not a whiff of unpleasantness afterwards! The RealThings philosophy of bringing the living world to the fingers of Amiga artists has been a great success. From the initial release of horses, the series has galloped ahead in terms of quality and realism. Now the set of six includes tough subjects such as humans and sea-life.

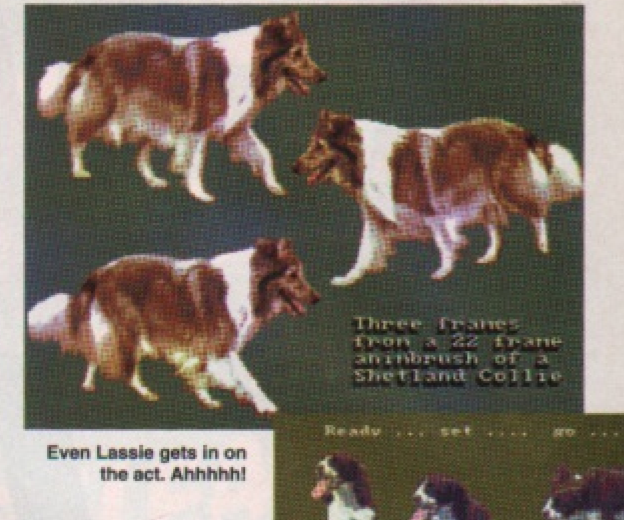
And being animbrushes, the RealThings subjects can be used at will in any kind of artwork you are creating on the Amiga. Ever tried to draw a running man? Or an attacking shark? These are jobs for experts, and thankfully RGB Studios have used the best to set new standards in animation realism.

The *Dogs* artwork is based on digitised originals, so you can be sure the dog does actually move like that. Capturing the action this way is tedious, and the work involved in getting animbrushes right is painstaking. But this latest release shows it's been worth it.

DOWN SHEP

The dogs contained in the new set range from family pets and TV 'stars' to working dogs. They bound, plod and chase around the screen in a truly realistic way. What use are these animbrushes? On their own, none. But in the hands of imaginative Amiga artists they act as springboards to some creative animations. The fun value is all the justification these, or any of the series, needs. RGB are also keen to stress the educational value of their products – with highly detailed documentation – but as long as I can call up a pre-drawn German Shepherd dog to savage my own animated Bart Simpson in 40 easy frames, that's fine by me.

You will only get out of this new selection what you put in, which is true of any clip-art, moving or not. However, as a bonus, this new subject features the ability to have all the brushes on screen simultaneously in *DPIV*'s HAM mode, plus line-cartoon development instructions.



Ready ... set .... go ...

Even Lassie gets in on the act. Ahhhhh!

CONCLUSION

Some of the action is repetitive – simply different breeds of dog doing the same thing. And although the animbrushes strive for realism, it is all too apparent where a human hand has had to touch up the artwork, and this particularly detracts from the Husky brush. My own firm favourite of the lively collection is a young pup who resembles the Andrex pup. I've named him Kent and I shall feed and water him frequently. It's true you know, life does mirror art... the next sound you will hear is me tapping on the inside of the monitor's glass...

REALTHINGS DOGS
at a glance

- 40 anim brushes to play with
- Sets new standards in computer animation
- Artwork based on digitised originals
- Incredibly easy to use
- Can act as springboard to creative animation
- Useless on their own, so you'll need some artistic talent
- Some poor anims in collection

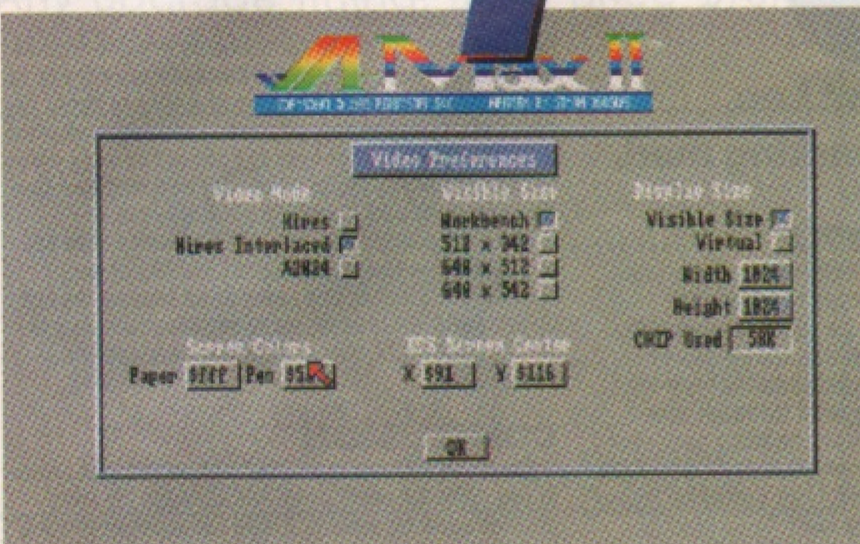
Address: RealThings can be contacted at: RGB Studios, Gables, Fram Field Road, Buxted, East Sussex. Tel: 0825 732666.

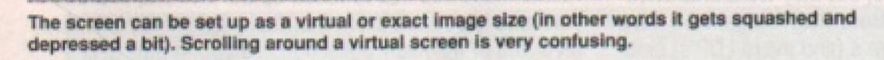
REALTHINGS DOGS £29.95

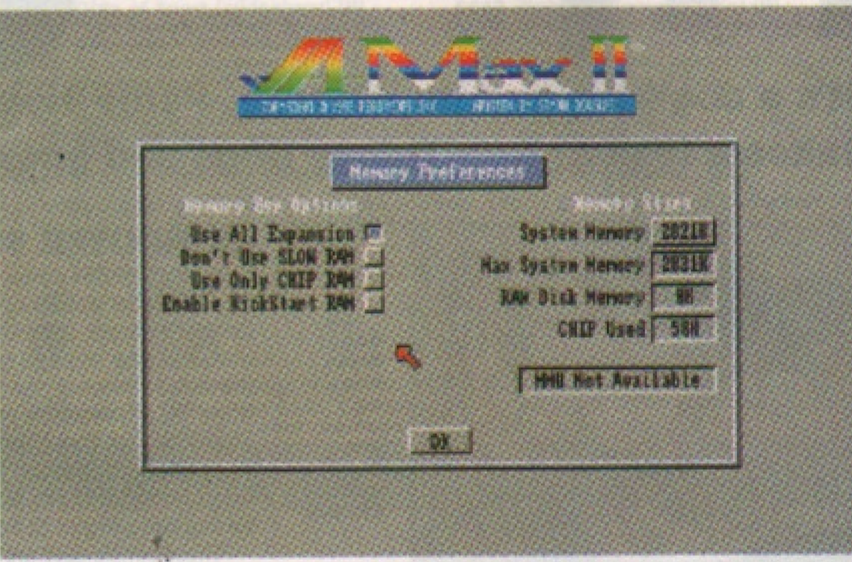
Lively collection, as good as ever, but of limited use to most people

EASE OF USE	92%
VALUE FOR MONEY	80%
EFFECTIVENESS	86%
FLEXIBILITY	70%
INNOVATION	70%
OVERALL	**85%**

A-MAX II plus 2.5




The screen can be set up as a virtual or exact image size (in other words it gets squashed and depressed a bit). Scrolling around a virtual screen is very confusing.

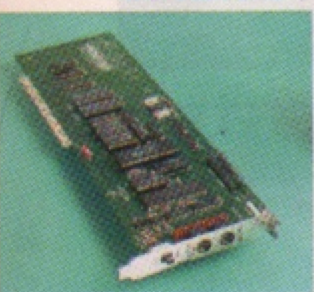


The *Amax* preference screen allows you to set up your system for the optimum flexibility. Sometimes it may be necessary to restrict memory in order for software to work!

Why would anyone want to turn their state of the art Amiga into a lesser machine? Tim Courdray investigates.

CAN WE TALK?

There are a large number of computers on the planet these days. Not yet as many as there are people, but getting there. The trouble is that, like people, some of them have trouble communicating with each other.



The computer, though, is just an information engine. All computers perform similar tasks and even do so in a similar way, but the intricacies of these tasks are different. Different hardware, same job. In the way that you wouldn't expect the manifold coupling of an XJ900 to be able to replace the coupling on a Triumph Trophy, the software on different machines is not interchangeable.

IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

That is, it's impossible unless you manage to fool your system into believing that it's actually a different machine entirely. This is a task for an emulator.

An emulator is a piece of software or, in most cases, a piece of software *and* hardware that can be added to your system to fool it into thinking that it is something else.

Emulators are big business on the Amiga. Because the operating system is so flexible and the hardware is so impressive it is not too difficult to convince our Amiga that it is in fact a Spectrum, C64, PC or even a Mac. In fact, the Mac is a lot easier than the others, because both the Apple and the Amiga run off the same family of processors.

All that is really required is a piece of software which will interpret actions from the processor and route them through the correct architecture on the Amiga. Plus, of course, you will need the operating system and the ROMs of a Macintosh.

DRIVING AMBITION

The other main problem is the disk drive. As many of you may know, the Mac uses a strange disk mechanism. Whereas the PC just uses a different format to the Amiga, the Mac uses a different format *and* a different mechanism. The Mac drive changes speed as the heads move in and out from the centre of the drive, in an effort to squeeze more data on (though a standard Mac disk actually only holds 800k).

To get around this *A-Max* uses its own format disks for Mac applications, and provides a utility for file transfer on a Mac disk. This does mean that initially, to get the system running, you need to have quite extensive access to a Mac.

SOFT SPOT

In theory, you can run System 7 and virtually every other piece of Macintosh software provided you have the necessary memory and hardware. In practise, it is almost imposible to run anything unless you have the Plus card and/or a Mac drive. Although a system called Minitransfer will allow you to format disks which can be used on both the Amiga and the Mac these can only hold 270k, which isn't enough to copy over the system files required to boot from, unless you use a really old system (which may not be compatible with some of

AMAX II
. . . at a glance

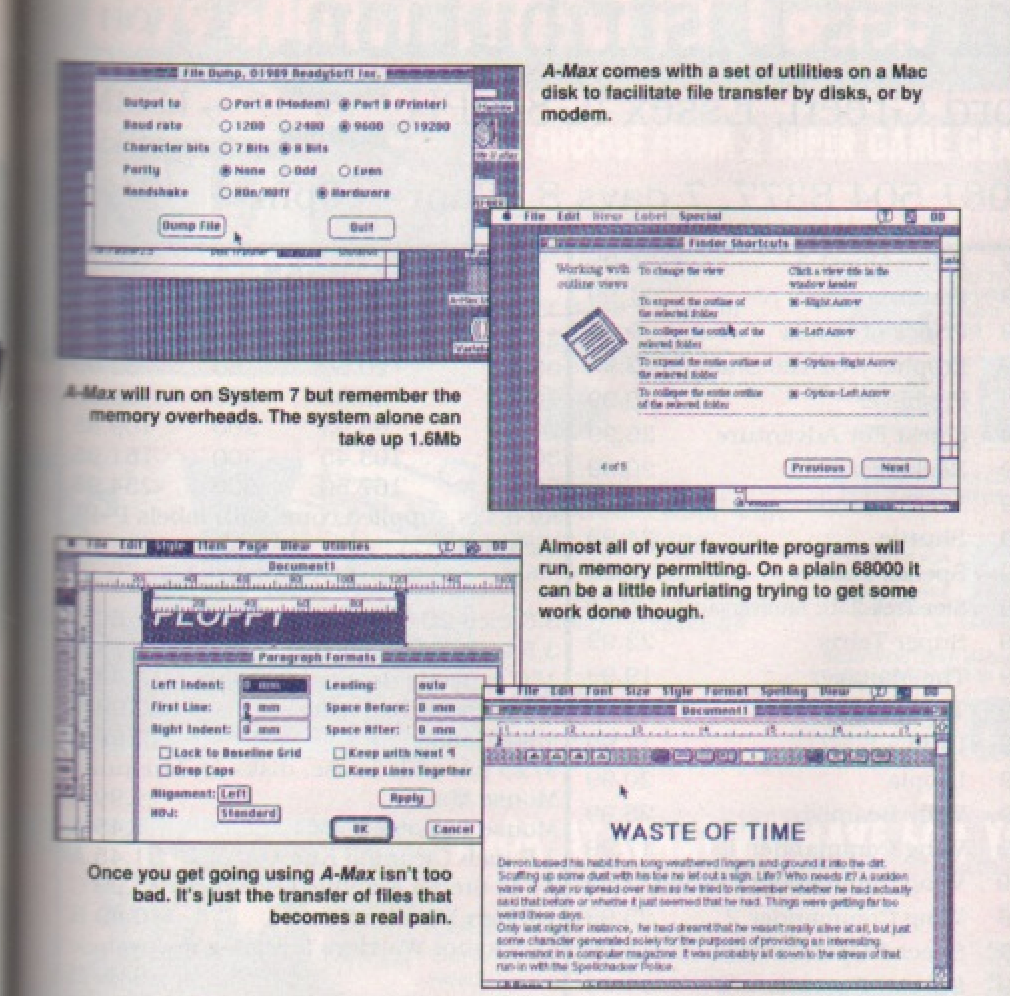
• *A-MaxII Plus* is card only • Supports Mac and Amax disks • requires Apple ROMs • Hard-drive recommended • Runs System 7 • Supports Appletalk • Imagewriter emulation • supports MMU and accelerator options • mono display

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'It would be much less hassle just buying a mac'

EASE OF USE	68%
VALUE FOR MONEY	71%
EFFECTIVENESS	88%
FLEXIBILITY	85%
INNOVATION	80%
OVERALL	**78%**



A-Max comes with a set of utilities on a Mac disk to facilitate file transfer by disks, or by modem.

A-Max will run on System 7 but remember the memory overheads. The system alone can take up 1.6Mb

Almost all of your favourite programs will run, memory permitting. On a plain 68000 it can be a little infuriating trying to get some work done though.

Once you get going using *A-Max* isn't too bad. It's just the transfer of files that becomes a real pain.

the software). There is an option to store the software over several disks, but if you consider that an average Mac system is over 1Mb, it's going to take quite a number of disks. Interestingly the disk transfer application supplied refused to run on a MacIIcx running System7.

All the test software did run on the *A-Max* though, including *QuarkXpress* and *MacWrite*. *Photoshop* did work eventually, but only after some teething problems with memory settings and using the virtual memory option from System7. Basically, to run most of the applications you are going to have to set aside two or three megs and a sizeable chunk of a hard-drive.

CONCLUSION

A-Max doesn't really make it as a Mac replacement unless you connect your own Mac drive. The unit we tested proved to be quite unreliable when it came to reading disks (but this may have just been a knackered drive unit).

A-Max is still a bit of an oddity. It can work quite well, and is fairly stable but the difficulty in setting it up coupled with the restrictive screen displays and its rather slow speed mean that it's much less hassle buying a Mac. With a Mac Classic II at about £800 with a hard drive and a 68030, it hardly seems worth forking out the money for a lesser machine. If *A-Max* could support some more of the Amiga graphics modes it may be more useful to professionals but ordinary chaps like you or me would be better off saving up for the real thing.

ROM BOTHER

The only problem, and this applies to all Mac emulators, is that Apple are peculiarly protective of their ROMs. The unit needs two 128k Apple ROMs as fitted to the old Mac Plus to be able to work. Because of licences and what have you, Readysoft are not able to sell the units with ROMs supplied, so anyone getting the *Amax* unit will have to remember to order the ROMs from an Apple dealer.

The second piece of bad luck is that since the Mac Plus is out of production, these ROMs are quite difficult to come across. Some cunning shops are importing them direct from America, but the lack of availability of units means that the ROMs are now selling at spectacular prices (one company quoted £200!, although usually they can be obtained for about £80 – 90). The unit comes with a list of UK suppliers but with the fluctuation in demand and limited supplies it's really a case of ringing around until you find someone who has a set and then haggling the price with them.

INSTALLATION

The *AmaxII Plus* unit is a card affair, so this is a unit only for people with an A1500 or above. The advantage of this is that the rear of the card sports an Appletalk connector and a midi port.

Appletalk can be used for transferring information to other AppleTalk capable machines, or for printing. Most Macs use Appletalk for printing, but as it is a serial interface you can set the option to redirect output to the Amiga's much faster parallel port.

To enable the card to take over the floppy drives it has to be connected at the front of the drive chain. To enable this to work a cable is provided to connect the card to the motherboard, with the original floppy cable connecting to the card. This is a bit of a tight fit unless the card is put in the first available slot. Even then some imaginative cable routing will be necessary if your Video or CPU slot is occupied.

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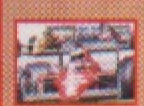
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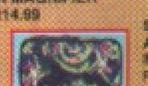


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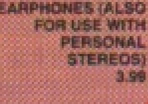
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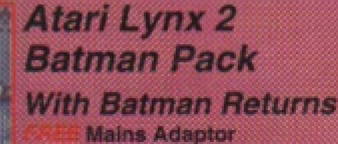
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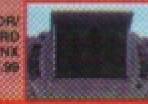


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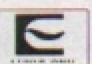
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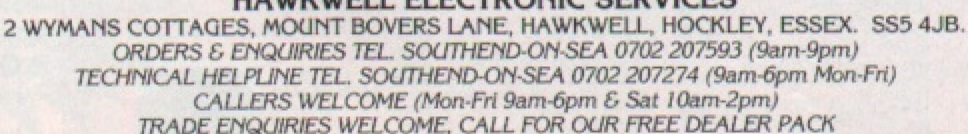
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SOUND FX MAKER

Tired of using the same old instrument samples? Tony Horgan looks at a new way of creating your own.

A few months ago, a PD utility called *Sample Maker* appeared. The idea was that you could synthesize samples, which could then be saved out and used with a music program. However, instead of giving you lots of knobs and switches to play with, it demanded you make new sounds by stringing together short sections of variously shaped waves. The results were hardly instant and, more importantly, far from impressive. Now, Cambridge International Software has come up with an alternative program, and taken a whole new approach in the process.

Unlike *Sample Maker*, *Sound FX Maker* (*SFXM*) uses a similar form of synthesis to that of synth keyboards. By passing a simple wave (or a number of waves) through a series of oscillators, filters and other gadgets, some weird and wonderful sounds can be produced. Old synths had lots of knobs and sliders for you to alter the levels of all the effects. I had hoped *SFXM* would use a similar interface, but instead the programmers have gone for a familiar combination of icon and requester box controls.

CIRCUIT TRAINING

If you're into circuit diagrams (and let's face it, who isn't?), you'll love *SFXM*. To make any kind of sound, you first have to construct a kind of flow chart, made from icons picked from the menus. Starting with a sound source, referred to as a Constant Generator, you can then use the mouse to place any number of 'components' anywhere around the screen. Once you've got a few oscillators and filters down, you can set about joining them together, defining the route the sound should take.

For those expecting to be able to hear the results of their experiments instantly there's a little disappointment in store. Before you can get any noise from the machine you have to move into the sample creator section. Tell it to compute the sample and it sends a wave through the flow chart, the results of which appear a few moments later in the sample window. As it does this a progress meter keeps you informed of how much of the sample has been computed, just to let you know it hasn't crashed or gone to sleep.

UNREAL TIME

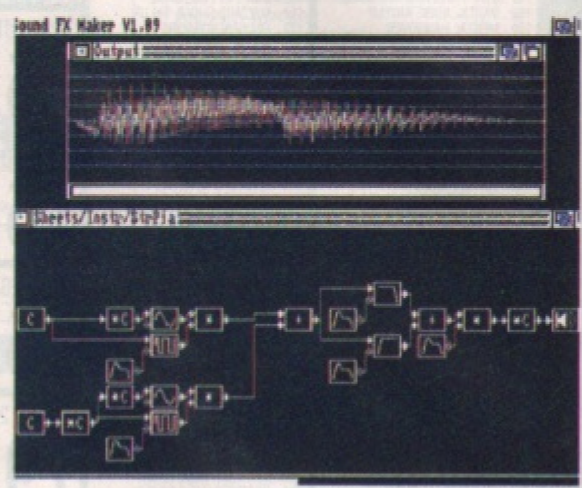
Unlike realtime synthesizers, with *SFXM* you can't hold down a note and change parameters simultaneously. This is a bit of a shame as it makes fine adjustments far too time-consuming to bother with. By the time you've changed the oscillator level and re-done the sample you'll have probably forgotten how it sounded in the first place. There's not really much the programmers could have done about this, but a faster sample creation routine would have helped.

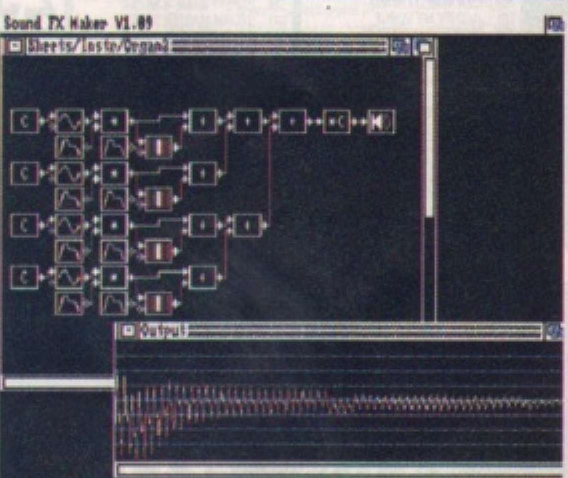
So what sort of sounds can it produce? Well, while some are distinctly reminiscent of the old C64 noises (i.e. piercing nasal whines), it is capable of knocking out some quite rich strings, deep and buzzy background hums, zappy techno-style effects and the odd electric piano sound. On the whole, the general sound is rather metallic. Where it falls down is in the bass department. Digital synths have never been much good at synthesizing decent basses and those created by *SFXM* are rather gutless. Your own samples can also be used as the source sound, which can then be processed by all the usual oscillators, etc. With the noise generator you can try making drum sounds or try some wind, rain or thunder effects.

CONCLUSION

SFXM is hardly the most user-friendly program around but its complicated structure is also one of its strengths. Because you have complete freedom over which components you use and where you place them, you can come up with an almost infinite number of new sounds. Add to this the fact that each component's parameters can be edited with extreme accuracy and your options are opened up further still.

Once you get over the initial difficulties of understanding the workings of the program, you'll have a lot of fun messing around with it. As you start making samples from scratch, rather than editing the numerous demo sounds, most will be pretty useless, but now and again you can come up with a few beauties. It does take quite a bit of patience to get results, but if you're willing to put in the hours your endevours will eventually be rewarded.





Sound FX Maker
...at a glance

- Lets you play dozens of instruments at a time
- Automatically creates music for you
- MIDI compatible
- Becomes even better as you upgrade your Amiga
- Easy-to-use
- Comes with 32 play styles
- Let's you define Jam with the band!

Address: Sound FX Maker can be obtained from Cambridge International Software, Suite 2A, Leroy House, 436 Essex Road, Islington, London, N1 3QP. Tel: 071 226 3340.

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PDD 072 RED SECTOR DEMO #4
PDD 075 SCOOPEX DEMO
PDD 076 SCOOPEX MEGADEMO (P)
PDD 096 MAGNETIC FIELDS DEMO #36
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PDD 107 BUDBRAIN #1 (2 Disks) (P)
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PDD 314 GLOBAL EFFECT

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PDU 394 RSI FONT EDITOR
PDU 365 TSB VECTOR DESIGNER
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BEYOND THE COLOUR BARRIER

24-Bit graphics havetraditionally been the domain of wealthy professionals. Mat Broomfield looks at a board that changes all that.

Of course, Vista Pro can produce 24-Bit fractal landscapes. You may have noticed them on TV recently. (Tomorrow's World – Growing plants on Mars).

OVER 16 MILLION COLOURS

At last you can draw and digitise with a full palette of 16.8 million colours thanks to Archos and Checkmate Digital. With three boards ranging between £249 and £599 in price, Archos have managed to produce a fully featured system that falls within the reach of ordinary people. The cheapest of the boards (AV12) is a 12-Bit unit capable of displaying up to 4096 colours, although unlike HAM mode there are no fringing problems. AVideoYC is the most expensive of the trio and has yet to be released, but it will apparently include a built-in genlock and digitiser, making it ideally suited to video titling and the like. The remaining board is called AVideo24 (AV24), and it's the subject of this review.

24-BIT A500

AV24's most exciting feature (apart from its low price) is the fact that it can be used on an A500. Apart from Checkmate's HAM-E system – which was not 24-Bit in any case – this is the first board that will work on a machine without expansion slots. However, despite what has been written in other magazines, don't be fooled into thinking that it can be used with an 'ordinary' A500.

The unit consists of a board which is approximately three inches wide by four long, and which plugs into the Denise slot in the Amiga. The Denise chip is then plugged into the AV24 board. A trailing cable from the board terminates with a standard RGB plug to which you can connect any Amiga monitor (although a multi-sync is the ideal choice). If the unit is fitted to an A1500, 2000 or 3000, this plug will simply fit into the video slot at the back of the computer. Unfortunately the A500 was never designed with this sort of expansion in mind, so getting the plug outside the casing means cutting a hole in the plastic to feed the cable through. To make matters worse, the cable isn't long enough to reach the only part of the casing with space for an extra plug (the back right-hand corner), so it means that you'll have to make an untidy cut at the back left side of the computer. To add insult to injury, despite the fact that the board is quite small, it's sufficiently high to stop you from replacing the metal shielding inside your A500.

Problems aside, AV24 CAN be fitted into an A500 in less than ten minutes, and once in place there's no reason why it can't remain their happily for the life of the Amiga. When in place, you'll have two RGB outputs to choose from. Both provide a normal picture in all Amiga resolutions, but the AV24 socket will also produce glorious 24-Bit images upon request.

TV PAINT

Of course, the board's no use without software, and in that area it scores abysmally and incredibly! How does it rate two such contrasting opinions you might ask? Well, it's very simple; the package comes complete with *TV Paint*, one of the best 24-Bit graphics packages available, and one which would normally retail for £800 on its own! Unfortunately it isn't the same version which won such critical acclaim in the past.

There are also six additional pieces of proprietary software which offer facilities such as animation, slide show creation and screen display, even genlock control. All of these pieces of software are AREXX compatible, but here's the BIG comedown: they're not just AREXX compatible, they're AREXX dependant. You absolutely must know how to use AREXX to access the majority of worthwhile program features.

At its simplest AV24 can be used as a 24-Bit display board for viewing any images that you may have created with other software packages. These include ray tracers, such as *Imagine* and *Real 3D*, and landscape generators, like *Vista Pro*. If you're fortunate enough to own a 24-Bit scanner or digitiser, you can also view the output of these programs through AV24.

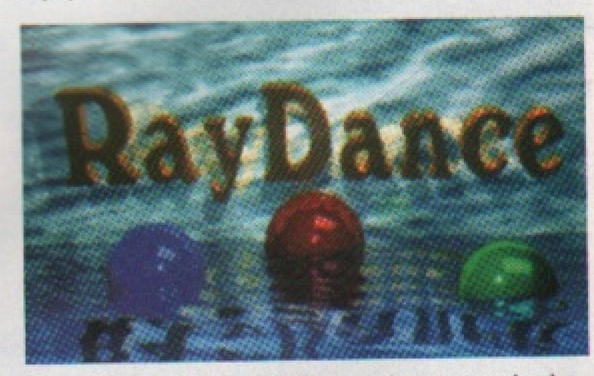
Having established the importance of a decent graphics package, Archos made a smart move by including *TV Paint*, a package whose pedigree seems impeccable. Unfortunately, its inclusion creates many more problems, and it's at this point that many of the 'ordinary' users at whom the board is aimed may have to quietly tip-toe from the room.



The ray tracing classic 'Balls on a chequered background' looks great in AVideo's 640x512 resolution.



Ray tracing packages are only at their best when their screens are displayed in true 24-Bit.



Although there are boards with a higher resolution, you can barely see the pixels at AVideo's standard resolution.





TV Paint only shows you a 12-bit display whilst you work, and although this is not too bad most of the time, it can make a dramatic difference. Compare the graduated sky of these 12 and 24-bit pictures.

THE CRUNCH

For starters, *TV Paint* requires a 68030 processor (accelerator) or higher to operate. It also needs a whacking eight megs of 32-Bit RAM (preferably two megs of chip RAM although you might get away with only one). These necessary extras can easily cost you twice as much as the board itself, and if you go the whole hog and add a hard drive (which is virtually essential too), you might as well say goodbye to £1000-1500. Of course, you could always buy a GVP A530 Turbo and solve all of your problems in one hit.

TV Paint is a strange piece of software. Having heard nothing but praise for it over the last two years, I was expecting it to be wearing red pants over its (metaphorical) trousers with a large 'S' stitched to its (figurative) chest!

The first sign that all was not well was in its manual. The fact that it was boring, badly organised, uninformed, incomplete and cheaply produced is just the tip of the iceberg. As an example of the pitiful level of grammar, how about this: 'Working in 32-bits used to required (sic) an important investment as well as cumbersome configurations. But the Amiga has brought out a genuine revolution in becoming a professional graphic station.' I presume he was trying to say: 'It used to require complicated equipment and a lot of money to work with 32-bit graphics, but the Amiga can now be used as a professional graphics work-station.'

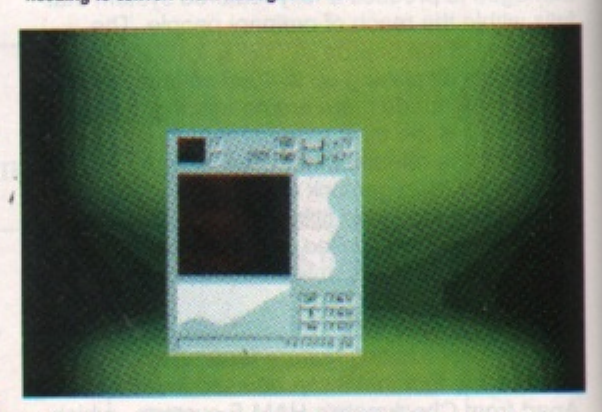
Fortunately *TV Paint* is fairly intuitive to use, so you won't need to refer to the manual much, especially if you're very familiar with *D-Paint IV* or *Photon Paint*. To be fair, it's not actually a bad package. Apart from animation and morphing, you can do pretty much the same things as you can with *D-Paint*. My major complaint is that it's so sll-loooowww. Even with the requisite 68030 processor and a 68882 maths co-processor, using the software is like working in HAM mode on a normal Amiga.

Most of the tools are actually more flexible than their *D-Paint* equivalents; for example, when drawing spline curves you can define the tension of the arc to create flatter or more protruding curves. Perhaps part of my reservation is caused by a lack of familiarity with the package, and I could conceivably grow to like it more with experience. I'm certainly impressed by its definable dither fills which can be used to create graduated fills of any shape, be they radial, curved, linear or a combination of all three. I can also appreciate the potential for its Gamma curve option which can be used to alter the colour balance of an entire picture, perhaps accentuating some colours and suppressing others.

TV Paint also has an extremely irritating display mode. For some reason, when you're working on a picture, the image is only displayed in 12-bits. This means that if you have created a very subtle colour spread that you want to apply manually to the screen, you may only see the difference between alternate colours at best. Of course, it is possible to view your work in true 24-bit, but all drawing functions are temporarily suspended whilst you do so.



TV Paint can also load ordinary *D-Paint* images directly without needing to convert them through *ADPro*.



TV Paint has the most flexible fill routines I've ever seen. You can basically draw the exact shape of the fill by specifying the colour density pattern required. It sounds difficult but it's straight forward.

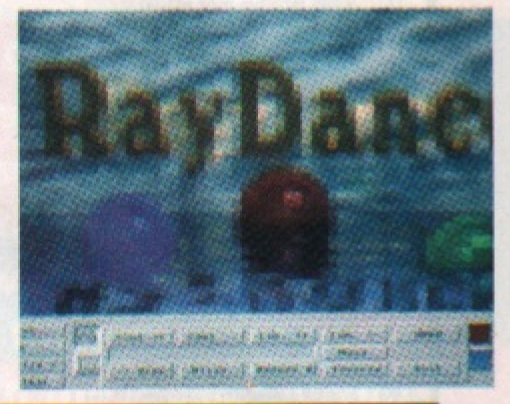
TV Paint lets you mix colours on a palette in the same way as an artist would; by blending colours together until the most pleasing one is reached.



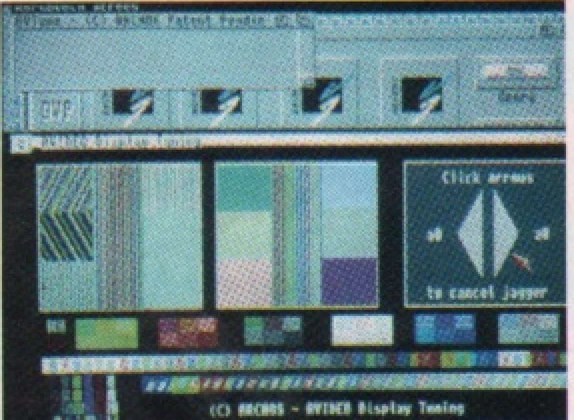
As you can see, 12-Bit digitised images look almost perfect, due to the high amount of detail in such screens.



Forget a 16 colour Workbench, I'm working with 16 MILLION colours!



AVPaint has a few interesting special effects such as this mosaic function.



Before you can use it, AVideo needs to be aligned with whichever version of the Denise chip you're using. This simply involves clicking on a couple of tuning arrows until the screen display becomes rock-steady.

aUse *AVPaint* to create a grey scale image, and you have an ideal way of creating high-quality images for use in desk top publishing.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

At first glance, the other art package, *AV Paint* seems unable to compete with *TV Paint* on any level. However, it does have a number of important features to commend it, although user-friendliness isn't one of them. Its main plus point is the fact that it only requires three megs of memory to operate, although Archos still recommend at least one – and preferably two – megs of chip RAM. Almost as important is the fact that it displays true 24-bit images, even when you're editing them, so you can see exactly what you're doing at all times. It also has a few special effects not supported by *TV Paint*, such as mosaic which can be used to pixelise a screen. I was also pleased to see that it allows you to merge two pictures together by simply loading one on top of the other. It's a pity that the drawing tools are so irritating to use.

A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

The other major piece of software supplied with the board is an animation and slideshow creator/viewer called *Opera*. Unlike *TV Paint*, it only requires a couple of megs of RAM in order to run smoothly. Unfortunately, it also requires a working knowledge of AREXX.

Archos have tried to reduce the pain of learning AREXX by providing a button-controlled interface called OperaCompo. By clicking on a button, a selection of appropriate AREXX commands are listed, and if you select one of them it will be added to the current script. This still doesn't disguise the fact that you need to learn about AREXX, but at least it's a step in the right direction.

HIGH-SPEED ANIMATION

Using its own special compression routines and double buffering, *Opera* can be used to create 24-bit animations which run at up to 25 frames per second; fast enough for commercial purposes. Furthermore, you can directly import standard *D-Paint* (Anim5 format) animations. These can then be overlaid on a 24-Bit background. By defining colour 0 as transparent, the program can also be used with a genlock.

As a slideshow generator, *Opera* supports a variety of professional style wipes and fades. As with all of its features, these can be accessed directly from the program, or from any other program that has an AREXX interface. This allows the possibility of creating multimedia programs, with *CanDo* for instance, that use AVideo for graphic display whilst retaining access to other Amiga programs to add soundtracks perhaps. In order to access these facilities, the AVideo server must first be run. This small program then allows you to call any AV24 AREXX command.

Without wishing to labour the point, I must just return to the subject of manuals for a moment. The *TV Paint* manual is abysmal; the AV24 manual is worse, but the *Opera* manual is virtually non-existent. Archos say that if you want to use the program, a complete manual is freely available from them... in French! For goodness sake, what are these guys playing at. *Opera* is, potentially, the most important part of the program, yet its English documentation is limited to a couple of read.me files and a few inadequate photocopied pages! For me, this sums up AVideo to a tee. It's a great product at a fantastic price, but it seems to have been produced by the rankest of amateurs. These people obviously know nothing of marketing, customer service or product packaging because apart from its box, AV24 just screams incompetence. For example, take the following comment in the AVideo command summary: 'Centering overscan pictures under AmigaDOS 1.3 remains a deeply mysterious affair to us.' No, it's not simply another case of bad grammar; Archos are genuinely saying that they don't have a clue how the Amiga calculates screen centring because they go on to talk about positioning the screen based upon 'our best estimate of the centre of the screen'. Perhaps it's just as well that *AV Paint* only works under Kickstart 2!

CONCLUSION

Despite the generally downbeat tone of this review, AVideo is a very nice product at an excellent price, and I'm in two minds about buying one for myself. Even though the supplied graphics packages are slow to use and require lots of memory, between them, they're more than adequate for most requirements.

A product of this nature is complicated enough at the best of times, and the documentation merely hinders any attempts to understand it. To give credit where it's due, Checkmate Digital have been exemplary in their efforts to help me with it, and I'm confident that this superlative level of service is extended to all of their customers.

AV24 is a world-class product created by people with all the business sense of a field mouse! Definitely worth a serious look, but expect much frustration whilst you're learning about it.

AVIDEO 24

...at a glance

* Budget 24-Bit card * Requires lots of memory and preferably a 2.0 Amiga * Software has incredible potential * Manuals belong on the compost heap * Needs some AREXX knowledge to use many features * Cut-down version of TV Paint thrown in for nothing

Address: Checkmate Digital, Unit 11, The Enterprise Centre, Cranborne Road, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, EN6 3DQ. Tel: 0707 664684.

ARCHOS £599.99

Great board, great price, great features, crap design.

EASE OF USE	40%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
EFFECTIVENESS	90%
FLEXIBILITY	95%
INNOVATION	75%
OVERALL	**80%**



Continuing on from last month's amazing feature on CD systems, this month our man with a plan, our ace on the case, our dude in the mood, Jolyon Ralph investigates what goes in to producing a CD title... It's all very well saying that you could create a jolly good game in 600Mb of CD space, but what about the poor developers that actually have to do it. Considering that the entire works of Shakespeare fit easily onto one disc you can see that it might take some small amount of effort. Salvation for over-tired developers is at hand though, as we look at some of the tools used for developing CD software in the first place.

AUTHOR ENCORE

CDTV offers vast new possibilities in software for the Amiga. Apart from never having to put up with 'Please insert disk 3 in any drive' again, complex games and 'serious' applications previously not possible on the Amiga are now within reach.

But how does a project get onto CDTV? Surely a 600Mb disc will take 600 times as long to produce as a 1Mb game for floppy disk?

This is where authoring systems come in. CDTV programmers can afford to be a little lazy, not needing to compress graphics into the smallest possible size or cut down code so it fits on a disk. With an authoring system most of the tedious programming work is automated, you have a collection of pictures, sound and text and you arrange them into a sensible order with the authoring package. Or that is how it should be.

Authoring systems are designed so that non-programmers can put CD titles together. With some simple CD titles, in particular POS/POI (Point of Sale/Point of Information) systems, this is quite an easy task. With more complex CDTV titles (such as *Fractal Universe*) problems with authoring systems often pop up, and halfway through a project if you suddenly find your authoring system can't do what you need it to do you're stuck, as most systems are not flexible enough to add new code in if you need to.

All the available systems vary in complexity and features, from *Scala 1.13*, which is probably the only system that can literally be used by anyone without programming knowledge, to *AMOS 1.3*, a programming language that is so flexible it's also excellent for CD authoring, but requires a knowledge of BASIC programming.

LIMITATIONS

To understand the features of authoring packages, and to see what is needed for CDTV developments, you need to examine some of the features, and the limitations, of the CDTV hardware.

Firstly, the CDTV is an Amiga. It still runs Kickstart 1.3 and it only has a megabyte of chip ram, no fast ram, and a standard speed 68000 processor.

Kickstart 1.3 is not a major problem. All of the programs reviewed here will work with Kickstart 1.3. Some, such as *CanDo*, take advantage of the extra features that Kickstart 2 provides, but many useful public domain utility programs only run under Kickstart 2.

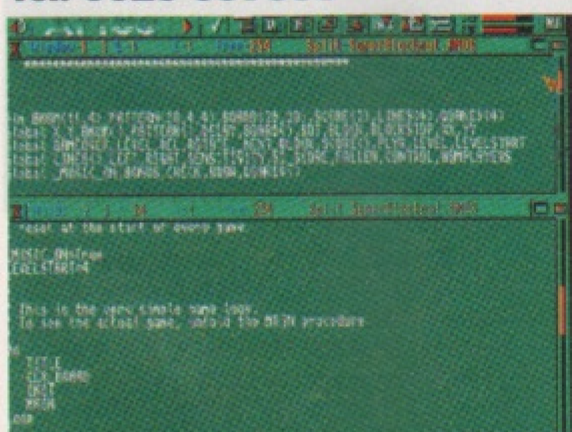
The 68000 prevents the use of some of the fancy transition effects available when using high resolution pictures, but again as multimedia relies so much on the Amiga's custom graphics and sound hardware, the speed of the 68000 isn't that important.

The 1Mb RAM is the real killer. Although 1Mb of ram may seem a lot, particularly to those brought up on 48K Spectrums and Commodore 64s, it really doesn't go very far when you start working with Multimedia.

Firstly, the CDTV ROMs take up some memory. After booting on a CDTV you usually only have around 700Kb free for use. High-resolution colour images can take up 160Kb, and for double buffering (loading the second image while the first is still being displayed to prevent a blank 'gap' between pictures). Add some room for sound and data and you're not left with much ram free for the authoring system code to fit into.

Although you can expand the CDTV up to 2Mb of chip ram and 6Mb of fast RAM, until more people buy the upgrades all titles will be limited to using just 1Mb of ram. None of the authoring systems described here were developed specifically for CDTV. All were developed for Amiga use, so their support of CDTV features varies from good to none at all.

AMOS
Europress Software, Price: £49.99, Tel: 0625 859333



AMOS, The Creator, published by Europress Software, certainly doesn't describe itself as a multimedia authoring system. Rather it claims to be a games creation package. Writing games requires a very fast and powerful language (most games are written in assembly language for maximum speed), and any language that can handle fast-moving arcade games will find Multimedia a doddle.

AMOS is based on STOS, the best-selling computer language on the Atari ST. *AMOS* is far superior and supports all the Amiga graphics and sound hardware. Based on a dialect of the BASIC programming language, knowledge of programming is certainly required, but can be quite simple. A program to load some IFF pictures in sequence is simple (see Table A).

TABLE A

```
LOOP:  LOAD IFF "iffpic1"
       PAUSE 10
       LOAD IFF "iffpic2"
       PAUSE 10
       LOAD IFF "iffpic3"
       PAUSE 10
       LOAD IFF "iffpic4"
       PAUSE 10
       GOTO loop
```

This code doesn't double buffer the screens, so there's a gap between the pictures loading. With *AMOS*, changing this is simple (Table B).

With over 200 commands including direct control for the blitter chip *AMOS* is

powerful enough for most multimedia work.

AMOS doesn't support the CDTV features directly. There's no way to play CD Audio tracks or access any other CDTV functions. Because *AMOS* was made expandable by adding an interface so new commands could be added I have written some code that adds support for CD Audio and most other CDTV functions. This will be available to CDTV developers for a nominal (£10) Shareware fee.

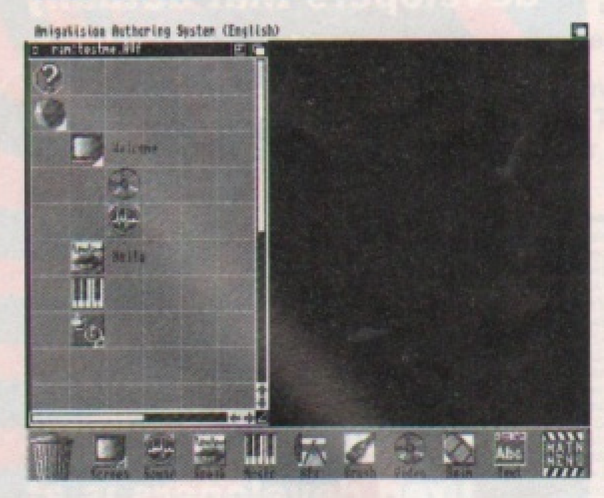
```
TABLE B
      SCREEN OPEN 0,320,256,32,lowres
      SCREEN OPEN 1,320,256,32,lowres
loop: LOAD IFF "iffpic1",0
      SCREEN TO FRONT 0
      LOAD IFF "iffpic2",1
      SCREEN TO FRONT 1
      LOAD IFF "iffpic3",0
      SCREEN TO FRONT 0
      LOAD IFF "iffpic4",1
      GOTO LOOP
```

AMOS has some of the best sound support in the packages listed here, it can play RAW or IFF 8SVX sampled sounds, *Soundtracker* or *Protracker* modules directly and *Aegis Sonix* songs (with a supplied converter). And with later versions it is also one of the few packages to support spooled sound (long sound samples played directly from hard disk or CD).

AMOS isn't without its faults. Firstly, the editor is a little quirky, and although you do get used to it it's far from ideal. Although *AMOS* multitasks it does not conform to the standard Intuition interface so you can't 'drag-down' *AMOS* to reveal the Workbench screen behind. As *AMOS* multitasks (you can flip between *AMOS* and Workbench with Left-Amiga A) this isn't a problem. Ditching Intuition provides *AMOS* with the basis for its major speed advantage over similar products.

The proof of the system is surely in the products it can create, and with *Fractal Universe*, the *Fun School 3* CDTV series (3 disks), *Mind Run* (1 and 2), *Illustrated Shakespeare* and *The Holy Bible* amongst the CDTV titles that have used *AMOS*, it shows the package's ability.

AMIGAVISION
Commodore, Price: £199,
Tel: 0628 770088



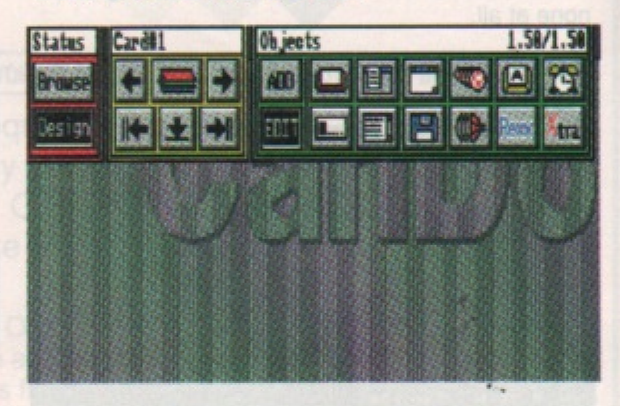
Amigavision is Commodore's offering in the Multimedia stakes. Originally written to be bundled with the Amiga 3000, and available at around £170 to all other Amiga owners. On first view it looks like a slick, feature-packed package, and many Commodore CDTV adverts say that *Amigavision* is the best way to develop CDTV titles. There are, however, some major problems with this package, particularly the lack of a run-time module. The Run-time code is essential if you want to distribute your production, otherwise people will have to own the full AmigaVision package to view your work! A run-time version is apparently with developers under beta-test, but as I was told this almost a year ago and there are still no signs of it, I wonder if it really exists.

Using *AmigaVision* is quite easy. You are given a grid on screen on which you arrange icons to build your program. There are objects to display pictures, play sounds, act on values of variables (conditional branches) and all sorts of things. It's a bit of a mess when you get large programs though, the screen gets cluttered with icons and it's more difficult to comprehend than a standard program layout, but for small tasks it's great.

AmigaVision also has problems on machines with little memory, it guzzles RAM as if it's going out of fashion. On a 1Mb machine you will be lucky to load *AmigaVision* let alone use it to do anything complex.

AmigaVision does have an impressive list of features for serious multimedia use such as support for Laserdisc players and touch screens. More importantly it is the only package which has decent database support.

CANDO
HB Marketing, Price: £99,
Tel: 0753 686000



CanDo, by Innovatronics, is a curious beast. Claiming to be a 'powerful interactive audio-visual applications authoring system', it certainly does look simple to use and packed to the brim with exciting features.

Based around the Amiga Intuition system, it allows you to create applications with gadgets, windows and pull-down menus. Example programs supplied include a simple spreadsheet and home accounts program.

CanDo's one major flaw is speed, or rather lack of it. Unlike *AMOS* which gains speed by ditching the Amiga Intuition system, *CanDo* loses speed by relying on Intuition. Long programs, or Decks as they are called in *CanDo*, can get downright sluggish on a standard unaccelerated Amiga.

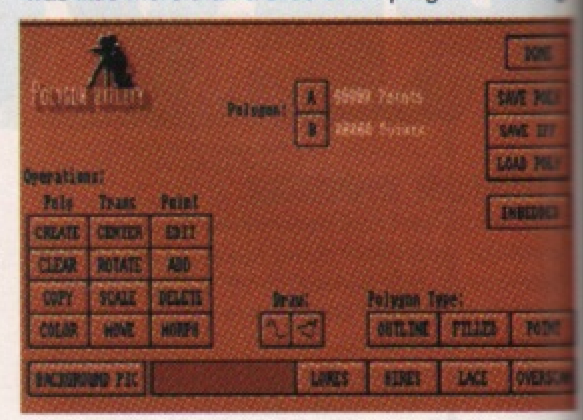
Another thing *CanDo* Can't Do is include any form of Amiga generated music, not even the prehistoric SMUS format music generated by *Deluxe Music* and *Aegis Sonix*. While it is possible to do many things that are not currently implemented inside *CanDo*, doing so requires DOS scripts that aren't particularly flexible as you can't return error codes back to *CanDo* to act on.

For CD applications that require a mouse and keyboard, such as encyclopedia-type products, *CanDo* could probably produce reasonable results, but at the moment its use in true multimedia is limited, and the lack of easy expansion available to it means we will have to wait for future updates before this position can be rectified.

While *CanDo* is great for its original task, creating simple applications for Amiga owners, prospective CDTV developers should approach with caution.

DIRECTOR II
The Right Answers Group,
Price £99,
Tel: 0101 310 325 1311

Director II is published by The Right Answers Group. Developed from the original *Director*, which was little more than a slide-show program with big



ideas, *Director II* provides almost every feature needed for CDTV production. I have used it successfully for my first CDTV title (*Fractal Universe*), and other titles, including *Advanced Military Systems* by Dominion Software and Design have used it.

Like *AMOS*, *Director II* is a script-based system using a dialect of the BASIC programming language. Unlike *AMOS*, it uses standard Amiga Screens, but thankfully it does so without being sluggish. The IFF load routines are particularly fast, better than those in *CanDo* or *AMOS*, and it supports spooled sampled sounds.

Another great feature in *Director II* is the IFF Animation support. Rather than just a simple PLAYANIM command, you have to write a little program in *Director* to display the Anim. The core of this is a small loop that allows you to synchronise sound, or change palettes at any point during an animation. This example code shows a typical *Director II* script for changing palettes at particular frames during a looping animation (see Table C).

```
TABLE C
      LOADANIM 1,"dh0:myanim.anim"
      PAUSEMODE 1
      LOAD "dh0:myanim.anim"
      COPY
      frame=1
top:
      IF frame=8 THEN COLOR -1,0,0,15,15,15
      IF frame=12 THEN COLOR -1,0,0,15,15,15
      ANIM 1,done
      PAUSE 1
      DISPLAY
      frame=frame+1
      IF done THEN SKIPANIM 1:frame=2
      GOTO top
```

There are several built-in screen transition effects which vary from single commands to small procedures that can be altered to produce your own strange effects. In general any of the effects done with *Scala* can be reproduced in *Director II* with a little effort.

Technical Support for *Director II* is not brilliant. Phoning The Right Answers Group in the States gives you a recorded message saying telephone support is only available for their Macintosh products, and Amiga support is by mail only, direct to the Author. After sending bug reports to the author's P.O. Box in California, I had to wait several weeks before receiving a reply, although he was good enough to send me a new version of the code which solved many problems I was having. I

suppose if you're paying under £100 for a development system you shouldn't expect the same level of support and commitment as PC packages that cost thousands.

Along with the *DEdit* program come several utility programs to make *Director II* script creation easier. These include a button utility for defining 'hot-spots' on screen for buttons, and a blitter utility for cutting areas out of screens onto others. Both these save a lot of notepaper and co-ordinate noting. I was mildly suprised to find that they were all actually *Director II* scripts themselves, showing the power the language has.

Director II has its faults, but it works, is fairly inexpensive, and if you're prepared to put a little effort into it you can get excellent results.

FEATURE CHART

	Amos	AmigaVision	Cando	Director	Scala1.13	ScalaMM
Easy to Use	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Hard disk inst.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Copy Protected	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Script language	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No*1	Yes
AREXX support	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Runtime version	Yes*2	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No*3
CD Licence fees	None	N/A	None	aprx $200	None	£1 per disc*6
IFF Pictures	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
IFF Animations	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Spooled
Anims	No	No	No	Yes*4	No	Yes
Sampled Sound	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Spooled Sound	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Soundtracker	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
SMUS music	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
CD Audio	No*6	No	No	Yes	No	No*7
CDXL Video	No	No	No	No	No	No
Database	No*5	Yes	Yes	No*5	No	No
RRP	£44.99	£199	£99	£99	£232	£468

*1 Scala 1.13 does support many functions from the LINGO language of ScalaMM, but this is not documented in the manual. *2 Amos comes with the RAMOS run time player, but with the optional compiler this is not needed and independent runtimes *3 A run-time player is supplied with ScalaMM, but it is protected and not freely distributable. A distributable player can be obtained from Scala UK for a fee of £1 per CD produced. *4 Director II can spool-load IFF Animations, but it still requires enough memory to fit the whole anim into memory. *5 Database functions can be programmed with standard file access commands. *6 CD Audio support in AMOS is available with the Almathera CDTV Extension, a licence fee of 50 per product is required for commercial use. *7 ScalaMM can play CD Audio, but only with a remote CDTV connected to the Amiga via a serial cable.

SCALA VIDEO STUDIO 1.13
Scala UK, Price £232, Tel: 0920 494294

The original *Scala* package, now renamed *Scala Video Studio*, is another good authoring system pretending to be something else. It's not packed with features, but what it does do (text screens and screen transitions) it does damn well. For simple applications that require graphic screens only, *Scala* is by far the easiest way to produce a title.

Applications are built up from pages, each page is based on an IFF background picture (a library of excellent background pictures is supplied), to which you add text (*Scala* comes with a selection of fonts, the best bitmap fonts I have seen on the Amiga) or brushes.

Pages do not have to be static. Text and brushes can scroll into place, or dissolve onto the screen – there are 50 different effects you can use to display text.

Text support is excellent. You can set fonts with bold, italic, underline, outline, drop-shadow, 3D-style (different colour borders on top left and bottom right), and change the depth and/or position of most effects, and *Scala* can automatically anti-alias text (smooth out jagged text by adding different coloured pixels around the characters).

Even if *Scala* isn't used for the main application, it's brilliant for creating text screens, or for adding text titles to IFF pictures.

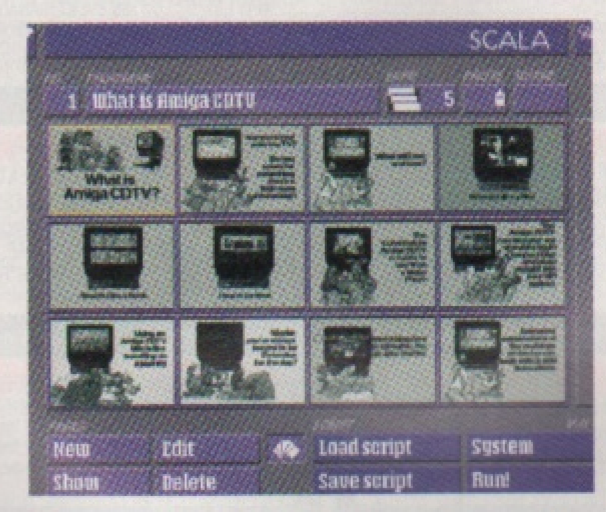
Buttons can be set up on screen to select different pages in the script, but these can only be selected with the mouse or joystick, not easy with the CDTV infrared controller.

Once your screens are defined you can select one of 54 screen transitions. These are excellent, and even on a standard 68000 machine most effects are fast. The power of the package on a standard Amiga makes similar programs on top-end PCs and fast Macs look slow and awkward. *Scala* has probably sold more Amiga 3000s than any other software.

There are some problems with *Scala*. The manual is out of date (Version 1.0 manual supplied with Version 1.13 software), and doesn't mention many important features, including the Lingo script language included and the fact that *Scala* can load *Soundtracker* modules. There are some dangerous bugs in *Scala 1.13*; if you have a text line that is too long it will sometimes crash horribly. Also, pressing Return at the end of a text line may leave your cursor in a random place on the screen.

Despite this, *Scala* is exceptionally good at its job, and for simple picture-based systems It's an excellent package.

SCALA MM200
Scala UK, Price: £468, Tel: 0920 444294



The recently launched big-brother to *Scala* is the upgraded version of *Scala 1.13*, although Scala (the company) have decided to keep both versions on sale, 1.13 at the original price and MM200 at more than double the price, over £460.

What does *Scala MM200* offer for double your money? The basic system has been improved so it can do far more complex multimedia scripts than before. New modes for buttons allow far better CDTV control, and the EX system allows extra modules to be bolted-on to *Scala*.

The Shuffler makes working with lots of screens far easier. Instead of a text line describing the picture a selection of small minature slides of the pictures are shown, and individual slides can be moved around easily with the mouse to change the project – neat!

But the most exciting new feature is the improved picture and animation support. Picture preloading and dynamic/static buffering (so pictures are loaded into memory before they are required to make loading appear instantaneous) is a great help, but the Disk Anim load routines allow even the largest anims to be displayed direct from disk, albeit slower than from RAM.

I'm sorry to say that *Scala* is copy protected. I thought the days of serious Amiga software having copy protection were gone. The little red dongle that fits into your mouse or joystick port has a through-port, and does not seem to conflict with anything, except you can't use the software on the CDTV, because the dongle can't plug in anywhere!

Unlike *Scala 1.13* where the player program is freely distributable (so you can distribute the player with your work) the *Scala MM* player program is protected, too, so you can't produce products with *Scala MM200* without buying a deprotected player from Scala UK. I can understand Scala wanting to pay for the development costs of *Scala MM200* by putting up the price, but demanding royalties too seems over the top to me.

Having said all this, *Scala MM200* is much nicer than the original. Is it worth the extra money? Probably not for CDTV development. At least Scala had the sense to keep the original *Scala 1.13* as a separate product for the original price. ➤

FRACTAL UNIVERSE

Progressing from an idea for a CDTV title to a finished product isn't an easy task. Jolyon Ralph tells us his story.

EUREKA!

The idea for *Fractal Universe* came about after a local ICPUG (Independent Commodore Products Users Group) meeting where ICPUG member David Annal gave a fascinating talk on Fractals including a slide show with music of absolutely stunning fractal images with backing music. I had played with *Mandelbrot Explorer* and other fractal programs on the Amiga and had come nowhere near producing fractals of that quality.

I borrowed some books on fractals and I became hooked. I approached David Annal and discussed the idea of doing a CD title on fractals. It could be both a multimedia 'book', explaining about fractals and how they are generated, and a set of generators for creating your own fractals. The same day David finished the overall plan for the product, a large flow-chart on A2 graph paper, and work was started, in September last year.

WHO'LL SPOOL?

The product plan called for long sequences of digitized audio, and a rather complex slide show with background music. I decided from the start that most of the work for this project should be done with an authoring system. At the time *AMOS* didn't support spooled sound directly, which was vital for the digitized audio we needed. *Director II* from The Right Answers Group seemed the best choice.

The first work revolved around the fractal generators. These were written in *AMOS* as separate programs, as there was no way any true authoring system would create a fast enough fractal generator. The Fractal Tree generator written in *AMOS* worked a treat and was the first part of *Fractal Universe* to be finished.

After using many other CDTV products I was a bit concerned with the input and control systems they used. While some were fine with the Infra Red control, others used the Infra Red control as if it was a mouse, that did not work well, and most ignored a mouse or keyboard completely if connected.

On an Infra-Red control the movement keys should act like cursor keys, moving a highlight around to select the option you want. This was very tricky to code, as all the Infra-Red does is move the mouse pointer around the screen.

In both *AMOS* and *Director II* I had to write some code to measure the current mouse position and detect whether there was any movement since the last check. These movements were converted to cursor key movements. This meant it was easy to test on the Amiga 3000 used for development with the cursor keys. I made the mouse pointer invisible to hide its eratic movements, and it all worked fine.

THE GENERATION GAME

After the user-interface had been written and we had decided on a screen layout, it was time to start the most time consuming part of the project: data collection. David had a few disks of fractals that he had generated, but hardly enough for our project. We needed a lot more fractals for our art gallery, so the whole family got involved in generating fractals, using the PC program *Fractint* to generate 640x480 fractals in 256 colours. Even when converted to 320x512 Interlaced HAM images on the Amiga the quality was far better than any fractals generated on the Amiga.

The fractals, saved out as .GIF files to low density 3.5" PC disks from our 386 PC were read on the Amiga 3000 using *CrossDOS*, and converted with the excellent *Art Department Professional* to standard IFF files.

While the fractals were being generated on the PC the next stage was to work out how to integrate the music with the pictures. This was the most complex, and in the end most expensive stage of the process. We wanted a continual show of pictures with music in the background. Our first thought was to use a *Soundtracker* tune in the background. This was, by far, the easiest way to solve the problem, but loading in high-resolution 16-colour images left almost no memory free for even a short *Soundtracker* tune.

The only way to solve the problem was to convert the music into one long IFF 8SVX sample (It's over 2.5Mb long), and use *Director II* to spool the IFF sounds direct from disc while also loading in the pictures.

Meanwhile the rest of the project was starting to take shape. Scripts were written and rewritten several times. Pictures to go along with the scripts were either drawn in *Deluxe Paint III* or *IV*, or scanned in with a JX-100 colour hand scanner, or JX-300 A4 scanner.

November was approaching and with it the World of Amiga show at Earls Court. Commodore had offered us a free booth on their stand to show our CDTV title, so we had to rush to get our first prototype disc ready to show.

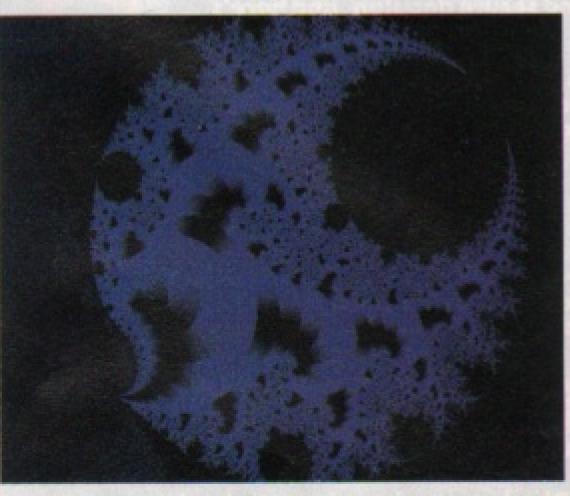
ONE TWO, ONE TWO

The sections explaining the history of fractals, and what fractals actually are were scripted and the voice-over was recorded. Our first experiments with voice-over prooved that our old Teac tape deck was far from suitable for multimedia work. After hours of looking through HiFi journals and twenty minutes walking down Tottenham Court Road, we decided on the Sony TCD-D3 Portable DA (Digital Audio Tape) recorder, which improved the voice-over quality dramatically. We had decided that recording voice-over in a studio was an unnecessary expense, so the voice-over ended up being recorded during a quiet afternoon in a spare bedroom at our house!

All the voice and pictures were integrated for the demo, and we prepared to cut our first CD. The product had grown to 79Mb by then, 1Mb short of filling the 80Mb hard drive I was using. More expense followed – we bought a Fujitsu 330Mb hard drive to finish the project.

Finally, a few days before the show was due to start, we arranged to get our first test disc cut. One-off test CDs, called Gold Discs because they are written onto write-once Gold CD's, can cost between £200 and £500 each to cut, so you don't want to do this too often!





These are some of the wonderful fractals that can be produced with *Fractal Universe*.

ERROR IN THE SYSTEM

But when we cut the disc, we put it in a CDTV, pressed play, and to our horror it didn't work! Instead of the sound playing properly with pictures loading the sound glitched and paused every time a picture loaded. After fiddling with the sample rate and two gold discs later we had it fixed, but not in time for the World of Commodore show – *Fractal Universe* was demonstrated there running off the hard disk attached to the CDTV!

After the show work slowed down a little. We moved into new offices in January, and slowly *Fractal Universe* came to completion. All the audio was resampled with the AD1012 12-bit sampler board which was far superior to the Audio Engineer we were using previously.

When a CDTV product is finished it has to be sent to Commodore Quality Assurance (QA) in the States, where it is checked for obvious bugs and problems. After two more Gold Discs we had finally removed all the bugs they found, and some they missed too. The artwork was done and sent off to Germany for the first production run, 1000 units.

Nearly a month later (and 10 days late) five large brown boxes filled with CDs arrived. At last *Fractals* was finished and is now in the shops!

It is available at £29.95 for CDTV/A570 from Almathera Systems (081 683 6418).



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AMIGA 600

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THE INDI GUIDE TO CDTV

IT'S A CD PLAYER —Yes, it will play all your Primal Scream, Pavarotti, Pink Floyd and any other CD you care to mention in superb high quality stereo, with remote infra red control.
IT'S AN AMIGA —Plug in the keyboard, switch on the external disk drive and the colossal range of inexpensive Amiga software can be used on your CDTV.
IT'S A MULTIMEDIA SYSTEM —Just imagine, stereo sound, images and text all on screen. It asks a question, you respond, it responds — truly interactive! Each CD disc holds hundreds of megabytes of data with instant optical access. The whole of Hutchinson's Encyclopedia fits onto 1 disc. This interactive system is a unique aid for Education, Business or Leisure. The future is here!

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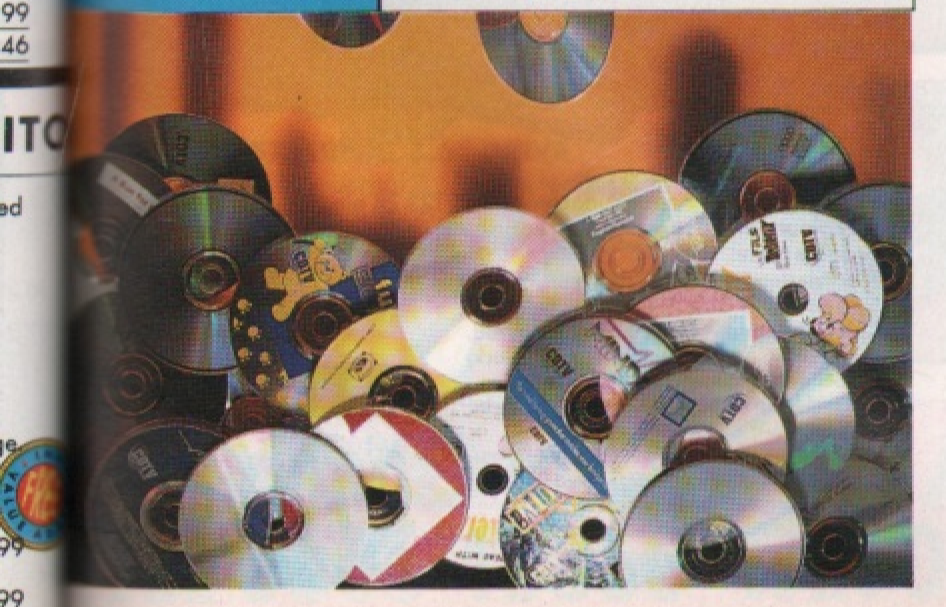
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Amiga CDTV Player ● Infra Red Remote Controller
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CDTV | SOFTWARE



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Advanced Military Systems	24.99
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REFERENCE	
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- Work bench 2.00 and Kickstart 2.04.

CONTENTS:

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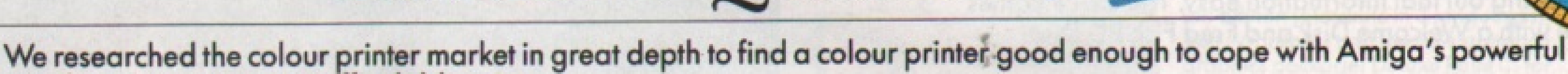
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We found the perfect printer in the Panasonic KX-P2180+KX-P2123 quiet printers.
We then considered that if you were going to buy a Panasonic printer, you would probably need a quality word processing package to use with it. We found that too, in 'wordworth', yet at a retail price of £129.99 we thought that might be a little too expensive on top of your printer purchase! So together with Panasonic we decided to give a copy of 'wordworth' free with every Panasonic printer. How's that for added value?

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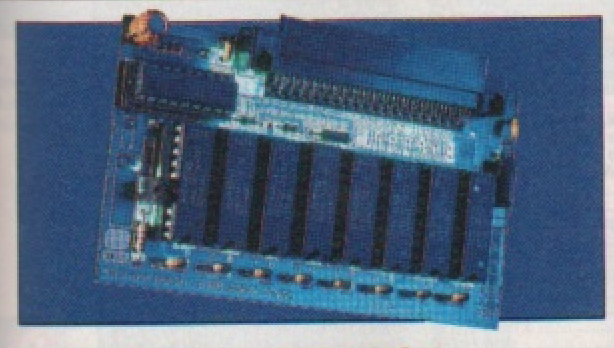
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Optional with battery backed clock

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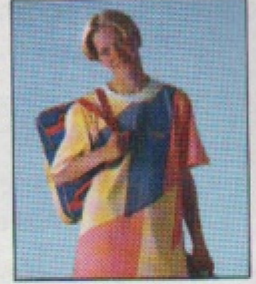


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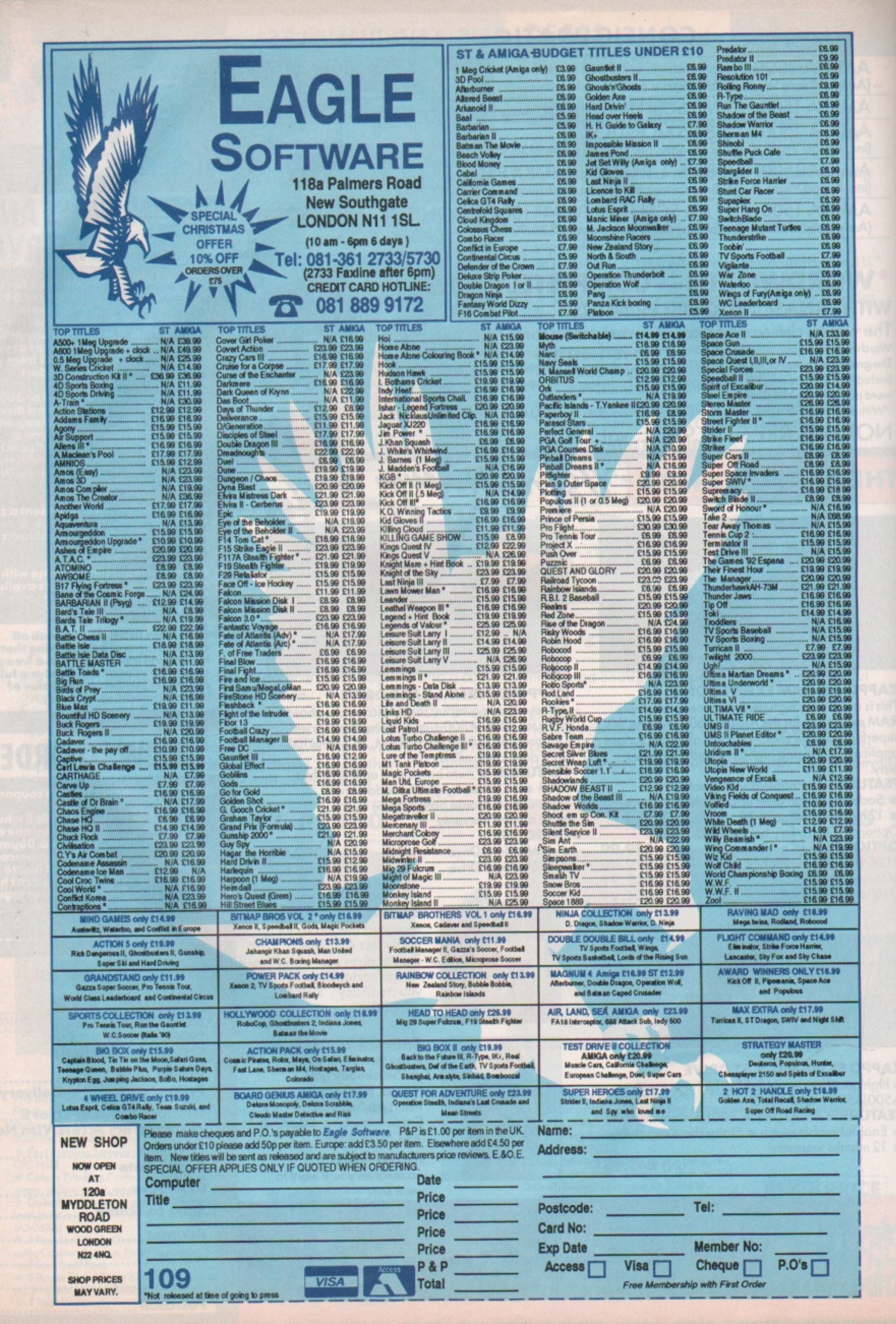
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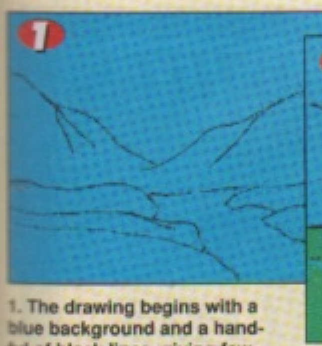
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In this month's art gallery we go from pastoral to high-tech with two excellent examples of what can be done with a little imagination. Movement and reflection are the themes of the month. So, without further ado, feast your eyes on this little lot...



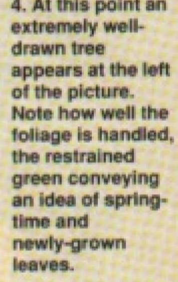
1. The drawing begins with a blue background and a handful of black lines, giving few hints of what it will become.



2. Foreground colour adds body to the picture.



3. At this stage the picture acquires a real sense of depth. The contours in the hills, ripples in the water, wind-blown clouds, and fence in the background, all give the impression of a living landscape. The dark at the base of the drawing is balanced by the light above, whilst the water remains the same colouras the sky, as if reflecting it.



4. At this point an extremely well-drawn tree appears at the left of the picture. Note how well the foliage is handled, the restrained green conveying an idea of spring-time and newly-grown leaves.



5. The composition is balanced by adding trees to the right bank of the river.



6. The picture, entitled 'Brook', is now complete. Notice how the added foliage, being yellow, tranforms what previously appeared to be a spring scene into an autumnal one; look for the turbulence where the water meets the rocks in the foreground. A sense of depth is maintained by keeping the centre of the drawing free from obstructions, allowing distance to be observed. Most of the background is now obscured, but I am sure you will agree the trade-off was well worthwhile.

ART DEPARTMENT

Remember, if you want to get your work in CU's Art Gallery, send us an IFF disk with the image broken down into the various stages of construction, along with a description of what's happening in each shot. Send your disk to: CU Gallery, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



1. From the gentle pastoral scene above we come face-to-face with the high-tech menace that is the T-1000 – big Arnie's remorseless adversary in Terminator 2. It was painted by Phil Chapman who, as an RAF technician working on the Tornado simulator, clearly knows a thing or two about high-tech himself.



2. Working from a picture in Cinefex magazine, Phil began by drawing a freehand outline of the T-1000. He used *Deluxe Paint IV* on a 1.3 version Amiga with a 1Mb upgrade and a second drive.
Rudimentary shading was added in a range of blues, prior to the addition of greater detail.



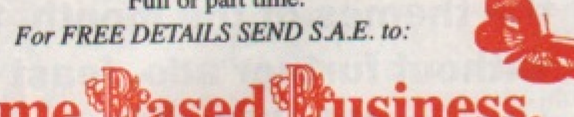
3. By this stage the reflective surfaces of the subject are already being conveyed very well. Most of Phil's work was carried out in magnify mode, which allows greater accuracy. The smooth effect was also used extensively to help blend the different shades – particularly important where the highlights were involved.



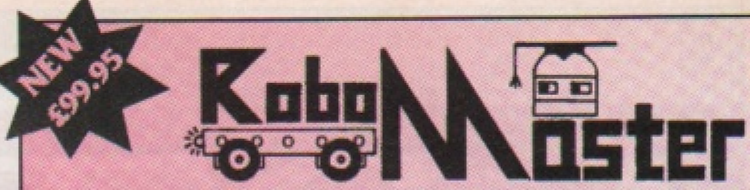
4. Following the completion of the head and shoulders, Phil added details of a helicopter cockpit to the background and gave the impression of a blurred window by using the airbrush (having first protected the head and shoulders with the stencil tool). I'm sure you'll agree the final picture, seen here, is of exceptional quality and really conveys the sinister unemotional menace of the molten monster.

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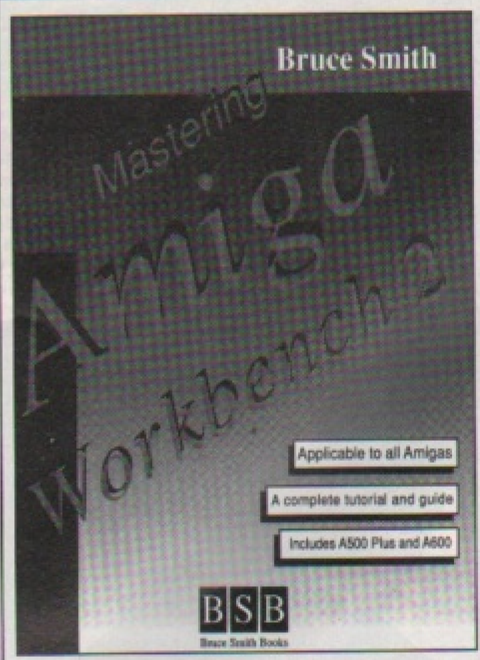
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HD8+

A530

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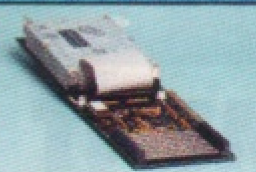
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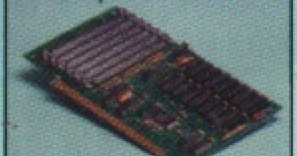
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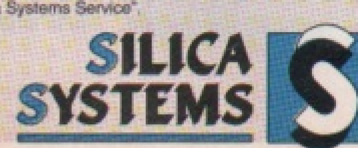
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GRAPHICS DIY



This is what Vincent looked like before he was manipulated

PART 5

Our complete guide to graphics continues this month with a look at three image manipulation programs currently available. Get ready to be enhanced...

If you're not satisfied with the way Venus looks, simply get a hold of one of the reviewed programs and do what you want with her.

IMAGE ENHANCEMENT

Do you miss the first buzz of excitement that Amiga graphics once gave you? Are you jaded with the same old screens – blue with the boredom of it all ? Then prepare to have your palette stimulated by Peter Lee, who cooks up some new ideas by slicing and dicing with a clutch of image enhancement software...

STALE ART

Ever felt that Amiga art has gone stale? No, it's not a hanging offence, in fact it was bound to happen. Most of us use identical software for creating graphics, and despite skilled mouse-work, haven't you noticed a boring similarity among all those gorgeous pieces of art? Like a traditional artist who uses nothing but water-colours or pen and ink, in time the output tends to blur into a boring sameness. Painters can switch from oils to pastel, from charcoal to woodcuts; Amiga painters have nowhere to go – or have they?

There really is a way to bring some sparkle and ingenuity to your work; to give it back the kind of charisma which people first saw in Commodore's little gem. How? Image enhancement.

HANDS ON

The beauty of the small range of software currently available is that it works hand in glove with your original graphic ideas; but it also lets you expand on them, experiment in the kind of weird ways only a computer could manage. After all, to a computer, art is simply a mess of numbers, and image enhancement software is just great at maths!

While the idea may be new to you on the Amiga, computer-enhanced pictures have been with us since frail signals from distant worlds were beamed back to NASA by remote probes. And although the space agency has come under fire recently for tweaking the output – making the sky on Mars just a little too red, for instance – image manipulation has changed our view of the universe. It helps bring features into focus, and generally makes the pictures worth looking at.

But even at the down to earth level of Amiga graphics, being able to engineer a picture and control exactly how it looks, opens the door to a new wave of artistry.

GET SERIOUS

Best-known contenders in this field are *Pixmate* and *Butcher* – loved by all who use them, unheard of by almost everyone else. They've been with us almost as long as the Amiga (both were around in 1987, a brief spell after the computer was launched), but time hasn't dulled their uses. Now they have been joined by a real heavyweight – *Art Department Pro*, whose stunning graphic skills include screen effects to kill for.

BRAVE NEW WORLDS

If you want to give your artwork real individuality, and explore new possibilities, we'll be showing you just what kind of trickery you can use to create

special effects. Some will be merely cosmetic while others provide the powerful building blocks to further graphic magic.

Read on as we unlock the door of this hidden world of Amiga art, first of all by focusing on the software which does the business.

ART DEPARTMENT PRO v2

HB Marketing, Price: £211.50, Tel: 0753 686000

Of the three items of software, this is the Goliath; a hefty program with a stunningly boring interface. But underneath, it sparkles with hidden genius. Primarily launched as a multi-image format translator, the new version has evolved into a magnificent workhorse for graphic manipulation.

While the aim of this article is to give you the chance to explore new artistic realms of image enhancement, I have to do justice to *ADPro* with a quick run-through of some of its major attributes. These include the ability to convert one image format to another – doesn't sound very impressive, but when you consider how many ways of storing computer images there are, you begin to see how vital this kind of work is.

Bulletin boards are full of PC-related images – GIFs, TIFFs, PCX files and so on; by downloading these you can convert them for use on your Amiga by running them through *ADPro*. The new 24-bit colour standards for the Amiga (for those who can afford them!) are also supported.

SHRINK WRAPPED

What's more, the great data compression standard for graphics, JPEG, has been implemented with this version. JPEG is a multi-pass compression technique which can turn a 144K GIF into just 16K, with little loss of definition.

Version 2 also supports an animation engine called *FRED* (only available under Kickstart 2).

SIZE MATTERS

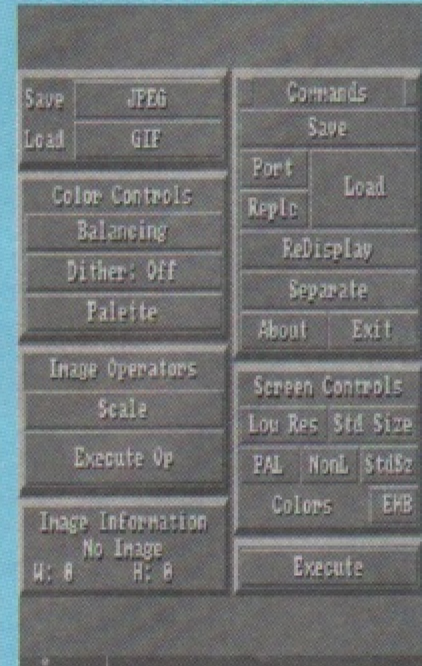
All Amiga screen formats are catered for, so you can convert an interlace HAM image into a low-res Extra Halfbrite copy. Images can be flipped and resized and filtered to give really unique results. Here are a few examples of how you can control the enhancement process:

- Remove isolated pixels – ideal for cleaning up digitised images. It works by comparing a pixel with its eight neighbours; if it's the odd one out, its colour is changed accordingly.
- Median Filter – works in a similar way to the RIP method above, but works by averaging the colour for each pixel.
- Line art – makes your image appear to have been sketched, but you need to have a well contrasted original to begin with. Excellent for two-colour DTP work.
- Convolve – a complicated process which imposes a 3x3 or 5x5 matrix onto your image. Knowing what you're doing with this feature requires something greater than a PhD, but luckily a number of useful matrices are included with the program.

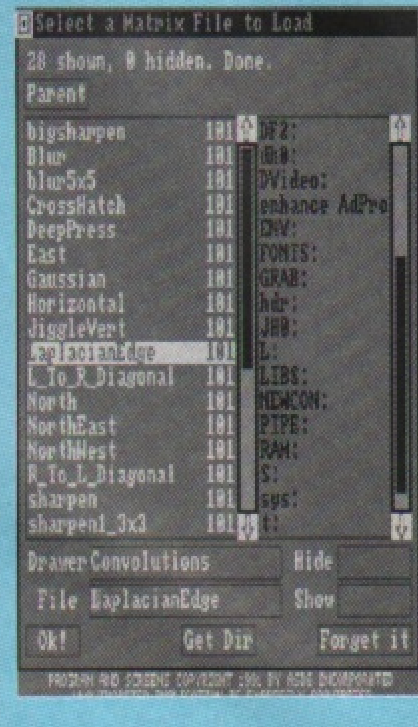
There's more, too, with the inclusion of many powerful graphic manipulation tools and several dithering techniques to help maximise the impact of your image. From a purely cosmetic viewpoint though, because of the way *ADPro* converts colour data into 24-bit format regardless of your setup, it is a shame that there isn't more of a graphics feel to what is a true miracle of Amiga art software.

Verdict: It's hardly as intuitive as the other two programs. But, with a little effort, stunning enhancements can be made of very ordinary-looking images.

ART DEPARTMENT PRO v2



This is the main *ADPro* screen. Excited? But don't be put off. Just because there aren't any cute icons doesn't mean this isn't the mother of all graphic manipulation programs.



A partial directory of the wide range of sophisticated matrix options available in *Art Department Pro*. Each has a major effect on the final look of your image.

Using a matrix option on Sherilyn Fenn produces this pseudo-carved image from a 16-colour original.

One of the *ADPro* working screens – here cropping a 32-colour picture of Robocop down to size. The screen is in interlace even though the picture is strictly low-res; this allows fine control of the image, which of course could be larger than a standard low-res screen.



ADPro turns a black and white picture of Monroe into a stylish image seemingly carved from white marble. The beauty of the matrix option is that you can experiment with it for ever and never tire of the output.

No effects here – simply an explanation. I scanned this image on a flatbed colour scanner on a Macintosh and saved it in 256 colour GIF format. I transferred the file to a PC disk, and using *Messydos* on the Amiga read it in to *ADPro*. I gave it a stiff test and asked for a rendering in low-res at 16 colours. The result is better than I could have dreamed of; colours are dithered and true, and the image – like countless thousands available on bulletin boards to modem users – is now in my library of Amiga ready graphics.

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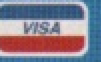


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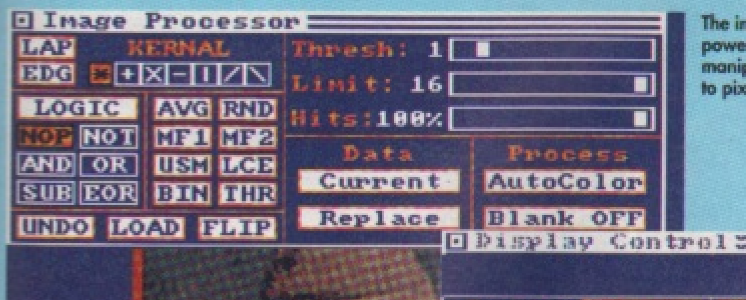


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PIXMATE v1.1

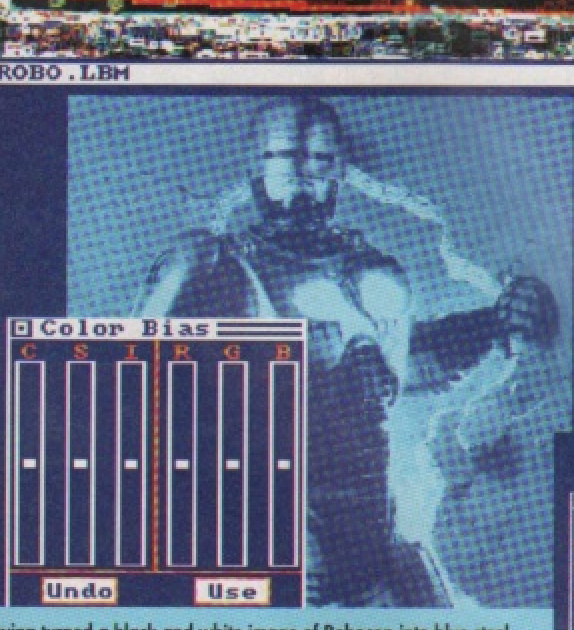


The image processor is the heart of *Pixmate's* power. Here you control how the program will manipulate your image data – from edge detection to pixel filtering.

Pixmate's Display Control, where a wide range of options are available to convert from one mode to another; bitplanes can be added or removed and the picture resized or interlaced.

The 16-colour picture of RMS Titanic yielded this poetic, ghostly image after filtering and edge enhancement in *Pixmate*.

Just for fun – a Cyberspace Venus, using *Pixmate's* flaky but interesting random colouring option. Red-heads have more fun...



Having turned a black and white image of Robocop into blue steel, you can alter contrast and brightness too in *Pixmate's* colour bias editor; you get excellent global controls over the whole image's appearance and can turn up the brightness on dark pictures, or make colour balancing amendments to colour images.

Pixmate also boasts a colour equaliser, to balance out colours in the same way you use a sound graphic equaliser. This also helps in determining which colours you can discard if you need some extra ones for titling.

PIXMATE v1.1

Alternative Image, Price: £50, Tel: 0533 440041

Drop-down menus on this old-timer bristle with options. They tempt you to experiment without denying you creative control. Graphic mode changes are a doddle, but the program isn't clever enough to work out that if you have a full-screen interlace image and knock off the interlace, then you really need to halve the length. But, as you can do this manually beforehand, there is no problem.

Converting 32 or 64-colour images to HAM is quick and clever, but sometimes a lottery when reducing from HAM – but what can you expect when 4096 colours are ground down to 32? While *DPaint IV* can do this in a roundabout way simply by switching modes, what *Pixmate* (and *Butcher* too) offers is the chance to globally alter the colour values.

For example, you can lighten or darken the entire palette with a simple mouse movement, and edit the contrast levels and change the Hue values. In this way a degraded image can be brought back to life.

Of real use to users of digitised images is the ability to clean up screens by removing the odd pixels which, as well as spoiling the look of the picture with excessive grain, make the IFF file compression routine create a larger file than necessary. If you intend using sequences of digitised images for animation, then efforts to remove these unimportant pixels will be repaid many times in smoother and smaller ANIM files.

Pixmate offers a variety of image filters, none of which could be described as intuitive and all of which are slow. The level of filtering – how 'alone' a pixel has to be before being removed – is a matter of trial and error but there is a wide variety of options for image manipulation. Images can be blurred or sharpened, reduced in complexity to give water-colour effects, or turned into stark black and white woodcut-type graphics for Desk Top Publishing work.

Verdict: A great little program, full of options and truly indispensable for serious Amiga artists.

BUTCHER

Produced by Eagle Tree Software, Price: £30, Tel: 0101 804 452 0623

Nicely named image masher. It has an easier control interface than *Pixmate*, and goes about the same job in a different, more intuitive way. There are enough differences in the two packages to make it an irritating necessity to have both.

For instance *Butcher's* Mosaic function offers some weird and wonderful masks to use on your screens. Some minimise the original so much that the artwork becomes abstract; others, such as the weave or cross-stitch, give a nice feeling of texture to the image. A set of pre-defined mosaic shapes is included, and you can edit your own – to the extent of writing a mini-text template on which the image will be printed.

The RIP (removing individual pixels) on *Butcher* is more flexible than either *ADPro* or *Pixmate*; it is instantly configurable to include individual or blocks of pixels of any colour available.

The edge detection is superbly implemented too, because it allows you to interactively test your settings as the job is being done, so by the time the test is complete you should have the picture about right. None of the other packages offers this flexibility, being more trial and error procedures.

Butcher falls down slightly on global control of images – altering colour values, brightness or con-

trast over the whole palette – and one major obstacle is its treatment of HAM images. While *ADPro* only has a few restrictions on HAM work, and *Pixmate* will happily work in all modes, *Butcher* denies most of its tools unless you convert from HAM to the more routine modes. This wasn't much of a problem before *DPaint IV*, but now restricts the ageing program's repertoire slightly. The software also belies its age in an inability to work with the 64-colour Halfbrite mode – *Butcher* stupidly thinks because there are six bit planes there, it must be HAM, so it really mangles up the display.

Verdict: My second choice to *Pixmate*, but contains enough of use to be a good stable-mate.

SO, TELL ME, WHICH ONE SHOULD I BUY?

It's crunch time now. The software does all this fancy stuff, but what's in it for you? In a word – help. Help in making the crazy world of Amiga modes bearable; help in improving your digitised graphics in a fraction of the time it would take manually; help in pushing the bounds of your imagination a little further.... help generally in getting the most out of your graphics.

With *ADPro* you can enjoy the riches of graphics created on almost any popular computer. Being able to load in a Macintosh image and output it for use in *DPaint* is a real blessing; being able to work some image enhancement magic beforehand is a stroke of genius.

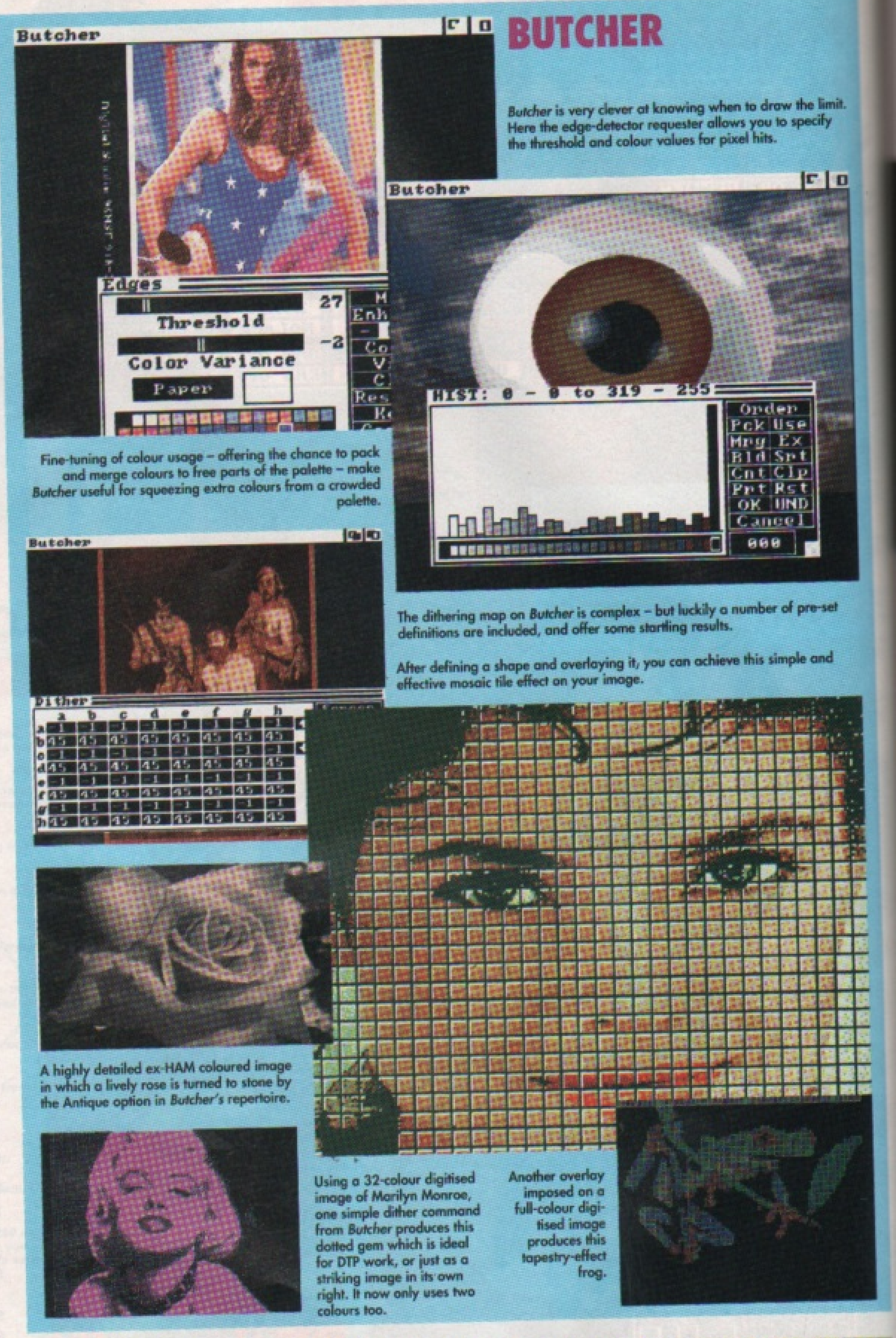
Simply to be able to do the best possible conversion job on turning 4096 colours of a HAM picture into the 64 Halfbrite range makes *Pixmate* or *Butcher* invaluable. A lot of other graphics packages don't like HAM, which means that without this facility you're stuck if you want a particular image and it happens to be in that mode. Being able to split the bitplanes and decrease the colours is invaluable in giving you room to add further colours to an image, or reduce storage space.

In DTP, too, work is usually in black and white or grey scale; each of the programs tested will convert colour to greys, and you can fine tune the contrast to match the output of your DTP program and printer. Users of digitisers will find the clean-up functions invaluable for ridding pictures of the annoying out-of-place pixels, and when it comes to rotoscoping a sequence of digitised animation, each program offers a way of capturing just the outline of a picture through sophisticated edge detection. Using this technique you can create quick and stylish line-art cartoon-style animations from sequences of real-life digitised frames.

Palette matching is a clever way of making sure that two separate images can be merged in as seamless a way as possible; added to this, you can decrease the number of colours in the palette, with little effect on the quality of the image, to free spare colours for titles and so on.

Each of the programs reviewed has something to recommend it to a potential purchaser. Equally, each has one or two drawbacks that need to be considered carefully. It is difficult to recommend one as choice depends on use.

The bottom line of image enhancement really defines what Amiga art is all about – if it pleases you, it's all the justification it needs.



BUTCHER

Butcher is very clever at knowing when to draw the limit. Here the edge-detector requester allows you to specify the threshold and colour values for pixel hits.

Fine-tuning of colour usage – offering the chance to pack and merge colours to free parts of the palette – make *Butcher* useful for squeezing extra colours from a crowded palette.

The dithering map on *Butcher* is complex – but luckily a number of pre-set definitions are included, and offer some startling results.

After defining a shape and overlaying it, you can achieve this simple and effective mosaic tile effect on your image.

A highly detailed ex-HAM coloured image in which a lively rose is turned to stone by the Antique option in *Butcher's* repertoire.

Using a 32-colour digitised image of Marilyn Monroe, one simple dither command from *Butcher* produces this dotted gem which is ideal for DTP work, or just as a striking image in its own right. It now only uses two colours too.

Another overlay imposed on a full-colour digitised image produces this tapestry-effect frog.

JPEG – WHY ALL THE FUSS?

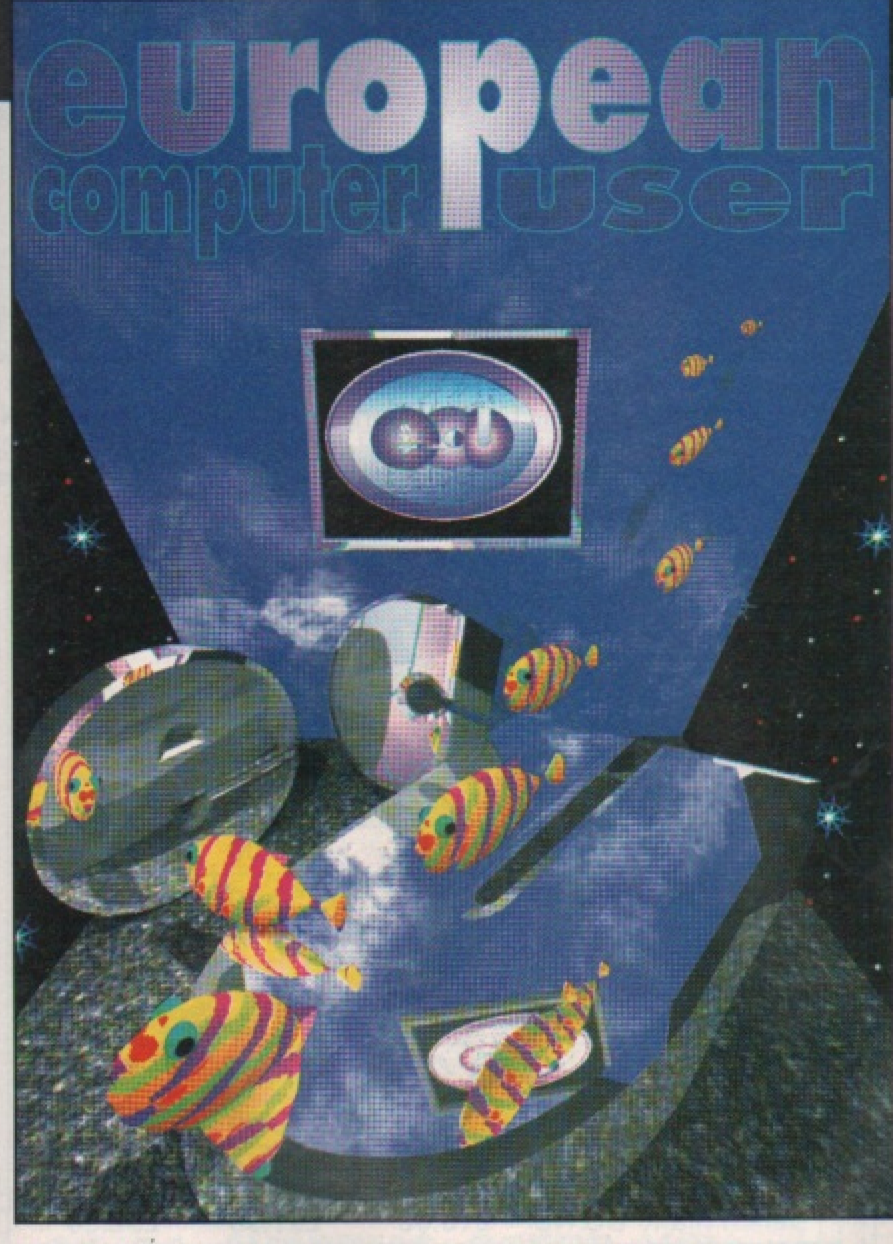
Art Department Pro is the first major Amiga graphics program to recognise the JPEG graphics standard. But what is it, and what use it is ?

JPEG is an acronym for Joint Photographic Experts Group – a committee of people who drew up the rules for this innovative image compression routine. Converting images to the JPEG format is a three stage operation in which the image is compacted. Major maths are performed on pixel values, and in the process you do lose some definition. No-one argues that this is un-noticeable, it's just worth it to shrink a 256 colour image down to a fifth of its normal size. The beauty of this for Amiga users with modems is that many JPEG files are available for download from bulletin boards – they zip across the wires in lightning time; and with a program like *ADPro* you can then uncompact them and save them in the standard IFF format for use in any of your art programs.

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PCL 5 Printer Command Language	-	YES	YES	-	YES
HP-GL/2 Vector Graphics included	-	YES	YES	YES	YES
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Warm Up Time	<45 secs	<60 secs	60 secs	33 secs	45 secs
First Page of Text Output	<20 secs	<40 secs	34 secs	20 secs	<15 secs
Document Description Language included	-	-	-	-	YES
Flash ROM	-	-	-	-	YES
Upgradable Firmware	-	-	-	-	YES
IC Card Slot	YES	-	-	YES	YES
Scalable Resident Fonts - in HP LJ III Emulation	-	8	8	0	8
Resident Bit-Mapped Fonts	11	14	14	16	14
AGFA Intellifont Scalable Font Technology	-	YES	-	-	YES
HP LaserJet III Emulation Included	-	YES	YES	-	YES
EPSON FX Emulation Included	YES	-	YES	-	YES
IBM ProPrinter Emulation Included	-	-	YES	-	YES
Standard Tray Capacity	100	70	100	200	100
Protective cover on standard tray	YES	-	YES	YES	YES
Cost per copy**	1.65p	2.00p	1.71p	1.64p	1.65p
Min-Max Paper Weight in gsm	60-157	60-105	60-120	60-131	60-157
Able to print on OHP Film	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Able to print on card (157gsm - Manual Feed)	YES	-	-	-	YES
Standby -Noise Level	<40dB	31.7dB	<35dB	38 dB	<38dB
Printing -Noise Level	<50dB	43.3dB	<46dB	50 dB	<48dB

**As quoted by manufacturers - 2/4/92

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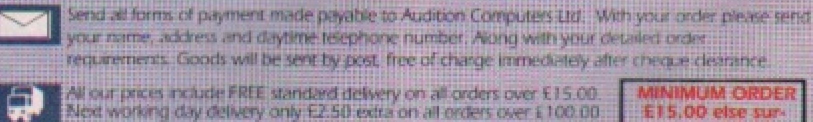
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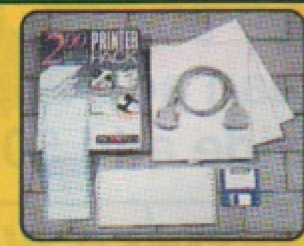
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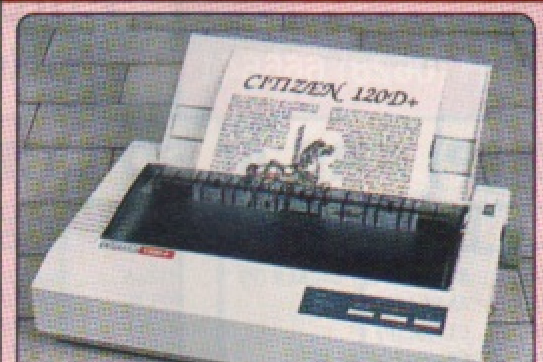
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- Parallel Interface
- Graphics Resolution: 360 x 360dpi
- Epson, IBM and NEC P6 Emulation
- Colour Option Available
- FREE Silica Printer Starter Kit

RRP £489; SILICA STARTER KIT £25; TOTAL VALUE: £514; SAVING: £215; SILICA PRICE: £299

£299 +VAT= £351.33 ref: PRI 2574

INKJET PRINTER



360 CPS 80 COLUMN

- Citizen Projet - inkjet - 80 column
- 360cps Draft, 120cps NLQ
- 50 Nozzle Head - Whisper Quiet 47dB(A)
- 8K Printer Buffer + 3 Fonts
- Optional HP Compatible Font cards
- Parallel Interface
- Graphics Resolution: 300x300dpi
- HP Deskjet plus emulation

RRP £496; TOTAL VALUE: £496; SAVING: £151; SILICA PRICE: £345



NOTEBOOK PRINTER



64 CPS 80 COLUMN

- Citizen PN48 Notebook Printer
- Non-impact Printing on Plain Paper
- 53cps LQ - 4K Buffer + 2 Fonts
- Rear and Bottom Paper Loading
- Parallel Interface
- Graphics Resolution: 360 x 360dpi
- Epson, IBM, NEC P6 & Citizen Emulation
- Powered From Mains, Battery or Car Adaptor

RRP £325; TOTAL VALUE: £325; SAVING: £126; SILICA PRICE: £199

£199 +VAT= £233.83 ref: PRI 2120

ACCESSORIES

SHEET FEEDERS

SERIAL INTERFACES

32K MEMORY EXPN

PRINTER STAND

ORIGINAL RIBBONS

COLOUR KITS

PN48 ACCESSORIES

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WINDOWS 3.0 Free Windows 3.0 driver with Starter Kit

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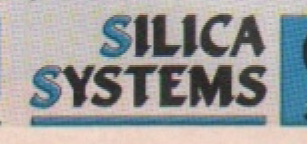
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- *PAYMENT:* Major credit cards, cash, cheque or monthly terms.

Before you decide when to buy your new printer, we suggest you think very carefully about WHERE you buy it. Consider what it will be like a few months after you have made your purchase, when you may require additional peripherals and accessories, or help and advice with your new purchase. And, will the company you buy from contact you with details of new products? At Silica Systems, we ensure that you will have nothing to worry about. We have been established for almost 14 years and, with our unrivalled experience and expertise, we can now claim to meet our customers' requirements with an understanding which is second to none. But don't just take our word for it. Complete and return the coupon now for our latest FREE literature and begin to experience the "Silica Systems Service".

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.... Postcode: ....

Tel (Home): .... Tel (Work): ....

Which computer(s), if any, do you own? 55J

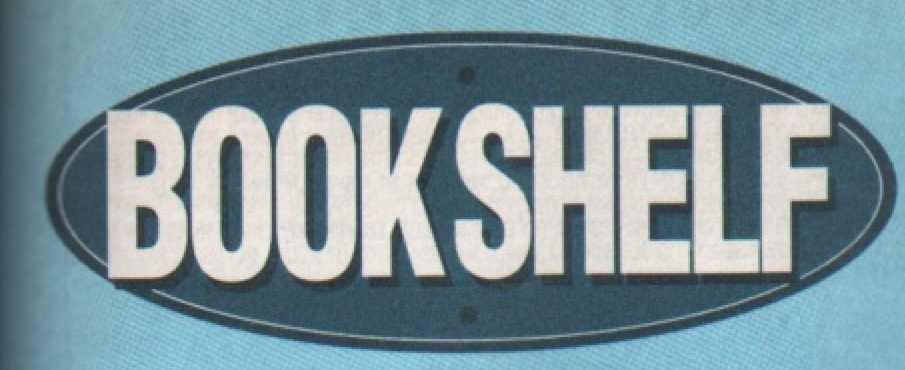
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THE ONLY AMIGA GUIDE WORTH READING. . . .

blue pages

If you're serious about using your Amiga, then the Blue Pages are written specifically for you. Within the next 32-pages you'll find all sorts of columns, helplines and tutorials to help you get the most out of your computer. This month we've got another two new columns starting, the concluding part of our OctaMed tutorial, plus regulars such as Points of View, Sound Check, Amiga World and Bookshelf.

contents . . .



PART 2

If you want to learn more about the Amiga, why not teach yourself? CU Amiga reviews some of the excellent self-help books available.

Amiga publishers BSB have something of a reputation for excellence. It will therefore come as no surprise to learn that their books take centre stage in any summary of current titles. Mat Broomfield reviews the current range of six books, covering everything from C programming to introductory level Amiga computing. If you wish to place an order, please make cheques/POs payable to Blue Smith Books. Send to: Suite 108, Smug Oak Green Business Centre, Lye Lane, Bricket Wood, St Albans, Herts AL2 3UG. Alternatively you may wish to order over the telephone by credit card, call 0923 894355.

MASTERING AMIGA BEGINNERS (PRICE £19.95)

This book is an absolute must for the literate Amiga newcomer. It provides a valuable accompaniment to the Workbench and Introduction manuals supplied with the Amiga, yet it manages to equal more than the sum of both books.

It is written by Phil South, a long-standing Amiga-user and journalist, and his style is informative and relaxed. At times it's almost possible to forget that you're reading a tutorial manual, as Phil illustrates the text with anecdotes and analogies to help you to understand the subject matter more easily. I must admit, his style is sometimes just a touch too relaxed, as he plays for jokes which are too feeble to use even on a lolly-stick, much less in a book aimed at mature readers.

The book begins by giving a basic overview of the general principles of Amiga use, ranging from disk drives and Workbench, to languages and CLI. As the book progresses, it deals with more specific topics such as Amiga fonts, modems, using printers and C programming, to name but a few.

Due to the vast number of subjects talked about, each one is necessarily brief in its coverage, yet Phil manages admirably to impart the essence of a topic without introducing too much confusing detail.

Phil also describes some of the commercial software and hardware available for both business and leisure, mentioning such classics as *Deluxe Paint* and *A-Max II*.

Equally helpful is his summary of the different Amigas available, and the facilities offered by each.

If you don't yet understand what a computer virus is, the section on viruses is essential reading.

For the Amiga beginner who wants to quickly expand his knowledge and discover the range of possibilities for the machine, this book is a densely packed and entertaining reference source.

MASTERING AMIGA DOS 2, VOLUME 1 (PRICE £21.95)

The next logical step having gained an overview of the Amiga scene and its basic operation is to learn about its inner workings and the way in which you can control it.

Mastering Amiga DOS, Volume 1 has been co-written by Mark Smiddy, ex-editor of Amiga Computing magazine and Bruce Smith, owner of publishing company BSB. Between them they have an impressive list of credentials and this reflects in their literary style; this book and its companion volume are probably the best written of the entire BSB range.

Whereas Mastering Amiga Beginners assumes absolutely no knowledge of the Amiga beyond how to turn it on, this book credits the reader with slightly more understanding of the computer. Whilst the authors still refrain from using unnecessary jargon, the book is a little more adult in its approach and it is written in a slightly more concise and intellectual style. That's not to say that it is written for experts; far from it! The book comprehensively details all aspects of Amiga DOS beginning with simple concepts, such as scripts and directory structures and progressing to advanced topics, such as recursive scripts and 'responsive' DOS programs.

The book is compatible with all versions of Amiga DOS, and when differences arise between versions, individual examples and explanatory text are provided to ensure that no-one is left out.

Many readers write to me asking how to create their own demo disks or compile their own auto-booting utility collections. With this book they need ask no more, for it includes detailed sections on creating such disks as well as providing tutorials on writing your own start-up sequence.

It also contains invaluable reference sections describing such things as the binary and hexadecimal numbering systems, the Memacs text editor and even hard drive back-up techniques.

This really is the ideal book for people who want to do more with their computer than simply load other people's programs.

MASTERING AMIGA DOS 2, VOLUME 2, REVISED EDITION (PRICE £19.95)

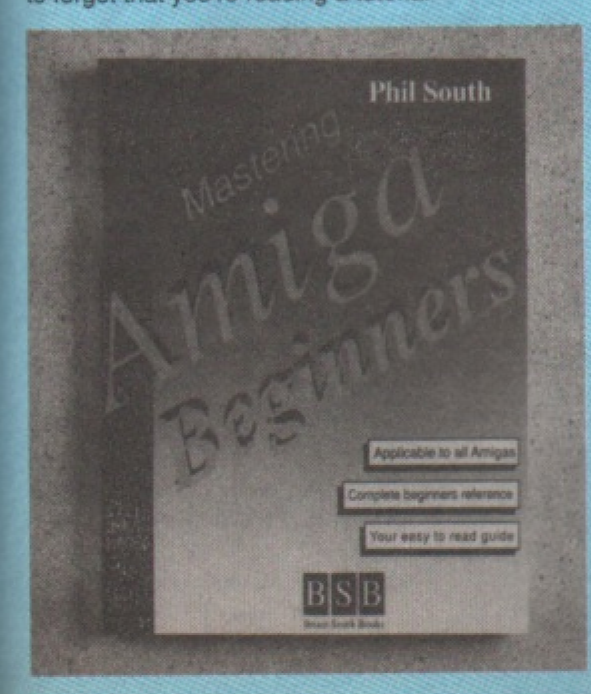
No matter how well you use Amiga DOS, there will be times when you need some form of command reference to refresh your memory about the syntax or function of a command or two. There are already numerous such books available, but no others are as comprehensive or as up-to-date as Mastering Amiga DOS 2, Volume 2.

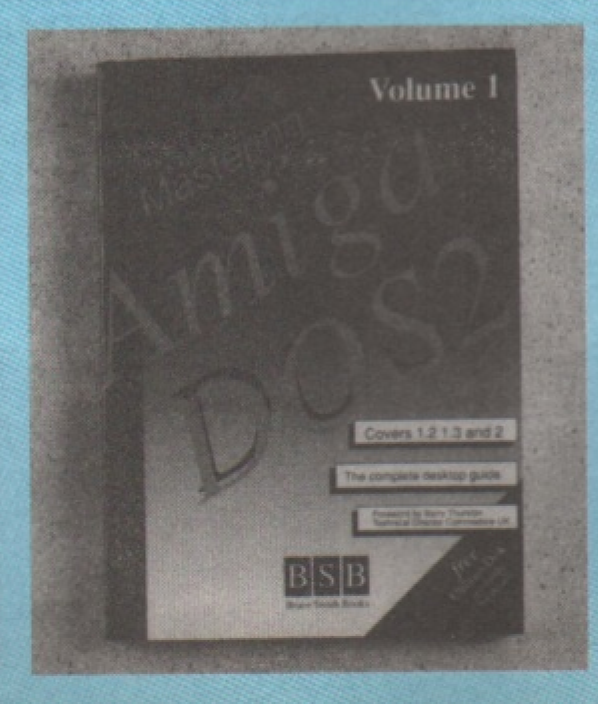
Again co-written by Smith and Smiddy, the book provides the ultimate DOS programmer's reference manual, detailing every single DOS command and their parameters. These even include commands which are not documented by Commodore itself.

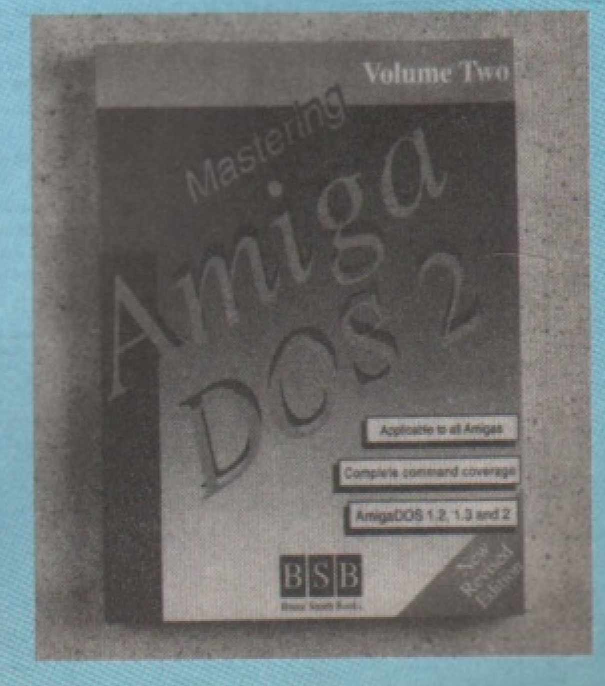
Because it's a reference work, this is not the kind of book that you can just sit and read from cover to cover, although there's no reason why you wouldn't want to work your way through it a couple of commands at a time.

Unlike the previous book, this one assumes some CLI and DOS knowledge, and is written in a somewhat more terse, and at times almost abbreviated style. For a DOS programmer, that's not necessarily a bad thing because you're unlikely to want to read through pages of meandering monologue before reaching the answer you're looking for. On the other side of the coin, DOS newcomers may find the command definitions a little uninformative, forcing them to re-read earlier reference works.

The book also contains indis-







pensable appendices listing Amiga DOS error codes and their meanings, how to use the mountlist, and the specifications of the Interchange File Format (IFF).

If you program using an Amiga and your library only consists of one book, this should be it!

MASTERING AMIGA C (PRICE £19.95)

Like most home computer owners, many Amiga owners dream of learning to write their own programs. In the early days of the computer, Amiga Basic was supplied with each one sold, but for the last few years Commodore has left people to choose for themselves which language to learn.

C is a universal language which can be converted from one computer format to another with minimum effort, it's also the language that most of the Amiga's ROM-based operating system is written in.

Being neither as restrictive and as slow as Basic, nor as difficult to learn as 68000 machine code (assembler), it's an ideal choice for would-be programmers who hope one day to produce commercial quality programs, be they for private use, PD distribution or full-price commercial release.

The book's author Paul Overaa is an Amiga user with expertise in all fields of interest, from graphics to MIDI, and (surprise, surprise!) he is an experienced C programmer.

Although the book aims to be as user-friendly and readable as possible, its subject matter makes it necessarily complicated at times, and I suggest that any hopefuls should have at least a working knowledge of Amiga DOS before attempting to read it.

Paul's writing style is relaxed enough, but I somehow felt that the book was not as good as it might have been. The subject is, of course, a complex one, but I felt that Paul didn't quite have the same flare as Smith and Smiddy or Phil South. It's not that his writing is by any means bad, but I felt that he took too long to get started and didn't really provide me with much sense of inspiration. I had always felt that learning C was an uphill task and this book did little or nothing to allay my fears.

Paul's task has been made more difficult by the absolute necessity of any student having to use a C compiler. Despite the fact that the *Lattice (SAS)* C compiler is probably the most popular one available, Paul also gives examples which are compatible with the *North C* compiler, one of a number of excellent public domain compilers available.

Of course, this means that examples are often repeated for each compiler, and this only seems to prolong the learning process. Worse still, almost unforgivable in fact, is the small matter of typographical errors. To be fair, there are very few, but when they appear in a program listing, they are enough to totally ruin a tutorial.

As much as possible, the book tries to avoid dwelling overmuch on complex parts of the Amiga's operating system because as Paul says, 'It's hard enough to learn to program in C, without having to learn about the Amiga's O.S. at the same time.'

Whilst I can see what Paul's getting at, and I agree to a certain extent, I wonder if that's a bit like saying 'It's hard enough learning to drive without having to worry about what all the road signs mean!'.

Anyway, regardless of my reservations, I would buy this book, as it still represents probably the most readable Amiga C tutorial book available. It just suffers slightly in comparison to the superlative standards of the other BSB books.

MASTERING AMIGA SYSTEM (PRICE £29.95)

Mr Overaa strikes again, this time with a book about the Amiga's operating system. By contrast to his book on C programming, this one is a far more lucid tome. Perhaps Paul finds it easier to talk about Intuition and libraries than he does to teach C programming?

Although chronologically this book is a follow-up to the C programming book, and it pre-supposes that the reader will have a basic knowledge of the C language, it is the perfect accompaniment, and is actually quite an interesting read in its own right.

I found this book good enough to read in bed, though I must admit to waking up with it on my pillow, eight blissful hours later! Who needs sleeping tablets, eh?

The book seems to be targeted at fledgling programmers seeking to understand more about the infinite subtleties and intricacies of the Amiga's internal architecture, and I daresay it will be extremely helpful to them. I also think that it makes interesting reading for any intelligent person who is simply interested in understanding more about such subjects as the blitter and multi-tasking.

Illustrated with copious examples in C, and detailed explanations and listings, Mastering Amiga Systems offers the programmer a good halfway house between introductory level books and Commodore's systems programming manuals and ROM kernals.

If you're going to buy Mastering Amiga C, you should strongly consider this manual as well.

MASTERING AMIGA PRINTERS (PRICE £19.95)

With a title like that, who could blame me for expecting a stodgy programming reference manual that goes into intricate and tedious detail about the inner workings of printers on the Amiga. Fortunately, I was wrong (on most counts...)!

How many printer owners can honestly say that they've never sat in horror whilst watching their printers churn out row after row of alien gobbledygook? Or groaned in frustration as their printers spurted forth ten pages of text with alternating rows containing 1 and 79 characters on them?

Mastering Amiga Printers aims to put an end to all that, by showing exactly how the monstrous beasts work, and how we can tame them.

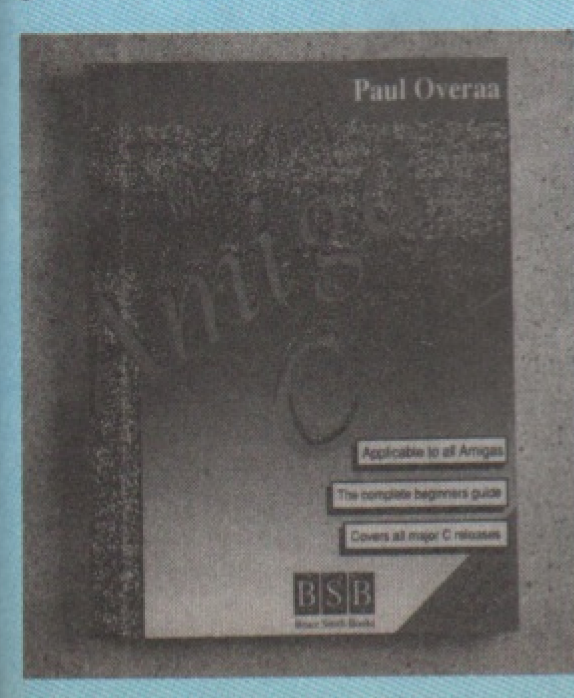
The book starts with a useful overview of the various types of printer that are available, ranging from daisy wheel and dot matrix machines up to ink-jets and lasers. The pros and cons of each type are explored, and a few popular myths are also shattered. This section is quite useful as a buyer's guide and it's a pity that prospective customers are unlikely to own the book until they've already bought, and perhaps had problems, with a printer.

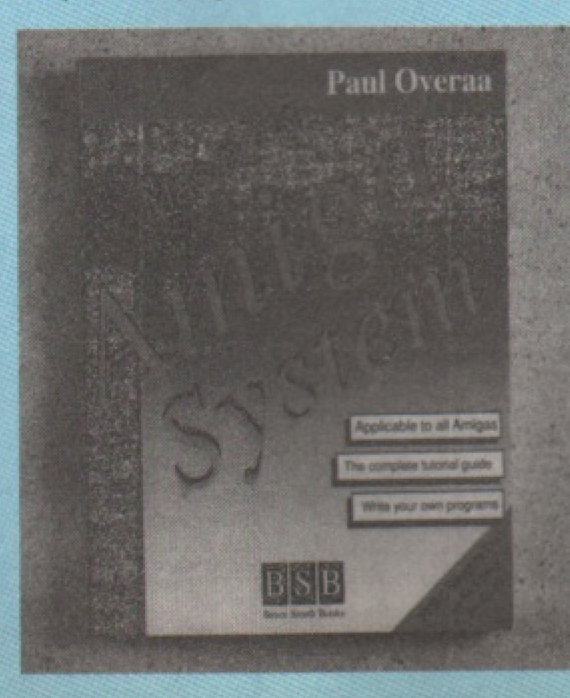
Preliminaries out of the way, the book goes on to give specific advice about how to set up and test your printer. Because the information given is generic in nature, it may not necessarily solve specific installation problems you may be having, rather it acts as a pointer showing you the kinds of things to watch out for.

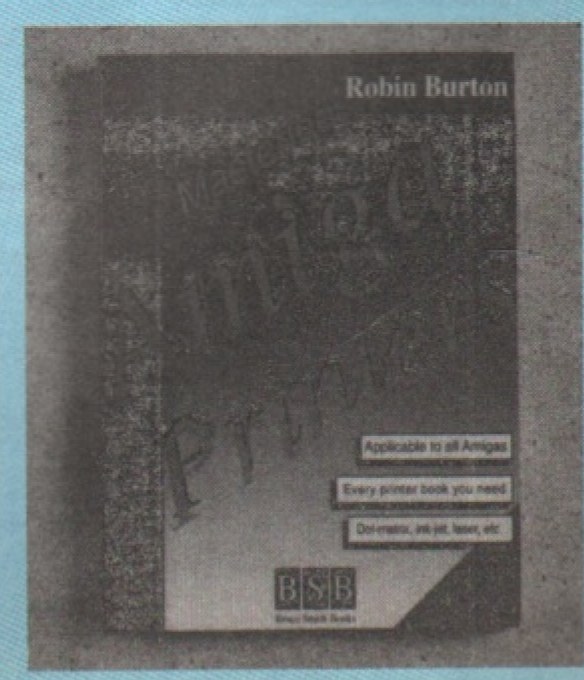
As the book gets down to the nitty-gritty, such subjects as Escape codes, graphic printing and drivers are explained. Robin seems to suffer from the same problem as Paul Overaa in his C programming book; he knows what he wants to say, but he can't always find a concise and elegant way of saying it. I freely admit that I found my mind wandering when he started giving a definition of bytes and words by way of a rather circuitous introduction to the character set and control codes. To be blunt, supposedly entertaining chapter headings such as Graphicus Horizontalis don't really make the beginner's task any easier either.

It's nice to see an entire section on printing from *D-Paint* as this is one of the key areas that defeats many users. It's also good to see that a support disk is available. This disk is 'free' in the same way as PD disks are 'free', i.e. £1.50 for post and packing (isn't it about time these companies bought cheaper envelopes?!).

The disk contains 41 printer drivers, including some obscure ones not available elsewhere. It also has a host of basic programs, and a screen grabbing and printing utility. Incredibly, there is no driver-generating package included so you'll have to get one elsewhere, if you need one.

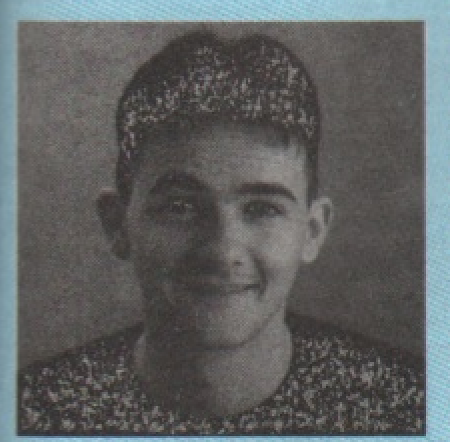






inside information

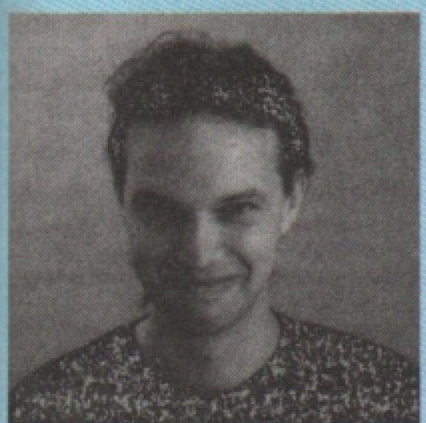
Recent months have seen a number of departures in the regular CU team, so we thought we'd introduce you to some of the new members this month, as well as some of the sad people we just can't get rid of...)



DAN 'ADOLF' SLINGSBY EDITOR

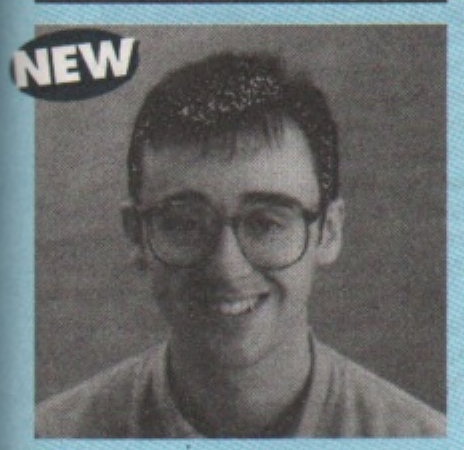
Dan's been with CU Amiga for far too long! That probably explains the grey hairs and pension book. He can often be found in the games room having a quick 40 winks to help him get through the afternoon, the poor thing.

Since his promotion to editor, he's become an altogether nastier piece of work and can often be found strutting up and down the 1st Floor with his fake wig and moustache extolling the virtues of cold baths and a good flogging. He also insists that the team sing company songs and do push-ups every morning.



NICK 'WHERE IS HE?' VEITCH TECHNICAL EDITOR

Nick is the only technical editor in the building which means that nobody else is quite sure what he is supposed to be doing. He caused some concern when he first started, due to his habit of turning up completely clad in leather every day, but since his bike has been stolen he no longer has an excuse for greasy hair and a stubbly chin. His only real claim to fame is to be the last one left standing at any team dinners due to his complete insensitivity to alcohol.



JONATHAN 'I TOOK A PAY CUT TO WORK HERE!!!' SLOAN DEPUTY EDITOR

It's true, all of it, especially the part about the pay cut. Having travelled down from the cold, wintry wastes of Yorkshire in search of fame and fortune he landed here at CU towers straight into poverty. When he's not sitting shivering by the fire he can usually be found in the dojo smashing his hands on pieces of wood. His joystick wiggling efforts are usually confined to Zool (brilliant console playalike).



TONY 'MCQUEEN' HORGAN STAFF WRITER

Fresh from a five week stint in the South of France in his five litre passion wagon, Tony has been welcomed into the bossom of the CU office like a baby rabbit to an eagle's nest. Before joining CU, Tony worked on AUI, but we won't hold that against him! Nor the fact that women have a strange habit of falling at his feet.

Tone likes his adventures easy and his joysticks hard. Something like his women – really.



STEVE 'BOWLY' PRIZEMAN STAFF WRITER

Another new face, Steve joins us after flogging double glazing over the phone to little old ladies who didn't know any better. Not content with this, he has consequently tried to fix up the entire CU Amiga staff with a nice line in conservatories and garden patios. Always one for a nicely groomed barnet (using his mum's old pudding basin), Steve is a vegan and not a Vulcan as we originally thought. This means that he can't eat the local pub's meat pies – lucky sod.



TOM 'SAD' GLENISTER AD MANAGER

Tom has been working on CU for 4 ½ years which is even longer than Dan. Gameswise, Tom hasn't a clue as he has yet to fathom out how to turn on an Amiga, let alone insert a disk.
It's a little known fact, but when Thomas was a wee young nipper he used to do exactly that – wee himself like crazy every time his dad came home from work. It's alright, though, as he'd learnt to control himself by the time he was 20. However, he does suffer from the ocassional relapse which usually occurs at industry dos.



GARRY 'THE WODGE' WILLIAMS PUBLISHER

Something of an industry figure (who can miss him!), our rotund little friend has been with EMAP for more than six years. After successfully closing ACE magazine, Garry promised not to do it again and was given CU Amiga to tinker with. And what a little tinker he is. Known to be one of the most generous men in the Northern Hemisphere, Garry can usually be found quaking in the City Pride's toilets when it's his round. And he is VERY round.



GORDON BARRICK GROUP ART EDITOR

Gordon joined CU Amiga after helping launch ST Review. But now he's seen the error of his ways and we're well and truly lumbered with him. At the moment, Gordon's having to fend for himself as his girlfriend's gone on holiday – burnt toast all round then, I suppose. There's not much more to say about Gordon really. He's the kind of guy that's got a good word for everyone, and everyone else slags him off behind his back. Mostly harmless (except when he decides to wear his underpants outside of his trousers).

THE TOP 40 AMIGA GAMES CHART

The only chart that counts! Here it is, the definitive software games top 40 movers and shakers.

1. Sensible Soccer (Renegade)
They've done it again! For the fourth month in a row Sensible Software's soccer sim reigns supreme at the top of the software pile.

2. Premiere (Core Design)
Straight in at number two is Core Design's cartoon-like arcade adventure. Can it topple *Sensi Soccer* next month?

3. Fire & Ice (Renegade)
Somewhat neglected at the time of its release, Andrew Braybrook's foxy platform game is certain to get you howlin' with pleasure.

4. Secret of Monkey Island 2 (US Gold)
Following on from Lucasfilms' accomplished adventure, the sequel was every bit as funny.

5. Formula One Grand Prix (Microprose)
Still in the top ten after all these months. Geoff Crammond's super slick racer shows no sign of stalling.

6. Crazy Cars III (Titus)
It might not be as good as *Lotus* or *Jaguar*, but it's still a white knuckle ride as far as you're all concerned.

7. Oh No! More Lemmings (Psygnosis)
They're back in yet more brain-straining puzzles guaranteed to get you tearing your hair out.

8. Games Espana (Ocean)
Hard to believe that this one's still in the top ten. Needless to say, we're not really fans of this.

9. Dizzy's Excellent Adventure (Codemasters)
Our rotund hero returns in a collection of his most famous adventures. Classic arcade fun from the Codies aimed at the younger player.

10. Civilisation (Microprose)
Sid Meire with a brilliant return to form in this empire building sim. Can you be the first to win the space race?

11. PGA Tour Golf + (Electronic Arts)
One of the best golf games just got better. In this new enhanced version....

12. Striker (Rage Software)
As good as, if not better than, *Sensible Soccer* so quite what it's doing languishing so far down the charts is a complete mystery. Buy this game!

13. Lure of the Temptress (Virgin)
Virgin's first stab at a decent graphic adventure in the same mould as *Monkey Island* is a bit on the brilliant side. Not to be missed.

14. The Manager (US Gold)
If you like soccer sims, then this is more of the same. Nothing special or outstanding here, but all the standard features you'd expect are included.

15. Graeme Taylor (Krisalis)
Who in their right mind would buy a game which associates itself with the worst England Manager ever?! Bring on Cloughie, that's what I say!

16. Project X (Team 17)
The best shoot-'em-up bar none! Smashing, super, lovely... if you only buy one game to grace your Amiga then this has to be it.

17. The Addams Family (Ocean)
Polished platform antics from all the regular cast with Gomez falling under your joystick control as you attempt to find the other members of his kid-napped family.

18. Jaguar XJ220 (Core Design)
Sneaked into the charts, but its reign might be short-lived with *Lotus 3* ready to zoom up its tailpipes. Not bad, though.

19. Epic (Ocean)
Some mags love it, others loathe it. Despite coming in for some flak from other magazines, our own beloved (and incredibly dashing) editor thought this a brill blast and so will you...(or else).

20. John Madden Football (Electronic Arts)
A welcome re-entry for the classic American Football game converted over from the Megadrive. The control system might not be brilliant, but the gameplay is absorbing.

21. Jimmy White's Whirlwind Soccer (Virgin)
Archer Maclean's superb snooker sim is even better than the real thing. Need I say more?!

22. Hook (Ocean)
Miserable *Monkey Island* 'tribute' that's not half as funny as Lucasfilm's epic. Avoid.

23. Lotus 2 (Gremlin)
Still hanging in there after all this time. Wait until this one comes out on budget — shouldn't be too long now!

24. Dizzy Collection (Codemasters)
Another Dizzy compilation offering another selection of platform puzzlers. We reckon you're all buying this one for the trading cards.

25. Pinball Dreams (21st Century)
The only good pinball simulator on the Amiga. However, it does suffer from only having four tables to choose from.

26. Alien Breed (Team 17)
Gauntlet in outer-space! Guide your super-soldier across Alien-infested levels picking up the ammo clips and blasting your opponents into intergalactic slime.

27. Robocod (Millennium)
One of the best platform games on the Amiga sees the return of James Pond, fishy spy supreme. Buy it if only to see the incredibly expanding straight-jacket. Lots of levels and lots of laughs. Recommended.

28. Risky Woods (Electronic Arts)
You'll probably remember this from one of our coverdisks a few months ago. Real hack'n'slash platform antics with massive sprites and tough guardians.

29. Dynablaster (Ubisoft)
The one-player game is a bit pedestrian even though there are tons of levels. The game really comes into its own in the immensley playable bomb'n'blast multi-player game.

30. Populous 2 (Electronic Arts)
The original god-game is thoroughly updated in Bullfrog's sequel to *Populous*. If you're a megalomaniac, then this is for you!

31. Space Crusade (Gremlin)
Modelled on the popular board-game, this is an outstanding interpretation and features alien-slaying galore.

32. Robocop 3 (Ocean)
As well as designing *Epic*, D.I.D. were also the brains behind this above-average license. What's happened to the film, though?

33. International Sports Challenge (Entertainment International)
Another mediocre sports compilation, although there's a rather neat cycling section.

34. Megafortress (Mindscape)
Pilot a souped-up B52 and blast your opponents out of the sky in this rather classy flight sim.

35. F15 Strike Eagle 2 (Microprose)
Pilot the USAF's premier dogfighting and strike jet in six world arenas. One of the best flight sims on the Amiga.

36. Eye of the Beholder 2 (US Gold)
RPGs are a bit thin on the ground in the top 40 at the moment, so its nice to see one of the best exponents of the genre still hanging in there.

37. Dune (Virgin)
If you're a fan of the film, then you'll absolutely love this! Although plodding at times, the game is completely addictive.

38. European Football Champ (Virgin)
A very sad conversion of a good coin-op.

39. Floor 13 (Virgin)
If you've always fancied yourself as head of MI5, then this spy thriller could be just what you're after.

40. Dark Queen of Krynn
Look, somebody, somewhere buys SSI's AD & D stuff but we've yet to meet them. More of the same.

Charts supplied by Microbyte.

BUDGET SOFTWARE

For less than a tenner, there's a vast selection of budget games on offer. Why not do yourself a favour and investigate some of the new re-releases?!

1. Falcon
2. Rainbow Islands
3. Pang
4. S.E.U.C.K
5. Lotus
6. F16 Combat Pilot
7. Panza Kick Boxing
8. James Pond
9. Batman — The Movie
10. CJ in America
11. Seymour Goes To Hollywood
12. Bubble Bobble
13. Super Cars 2
14. Turrican 2
15. 1st Division Manager
16. North and South
17. Steg the Slug
18. Treasure Island Dizzy
19. Full Contact
20. Pro Tennis

FRIENDS

No matter where you live, you can always find someone to chat to and exchange ideas with thanks to CIX, the Computer Information Exchange. Mat Broomfield rings the changes.

BITING THE BULLET

Over the past few months, we've looked at ways that you can communicate with the rest of the world using your Amiga and a modem. Although bulletin boards are the most prolific type of public communications activity, conferencing services are also tremendously popular. The Computer Information Exchange (CIX) is one of the most popular conferencing services in Britain, so, new subscription in hand (figuratively speaking), I cranked up my trusty modem and set forth on an electronic safari.

SPEAK EASY

Unlike bulletin boards which are designed with the exchange of data as a primary objective, CIX is used for exchanging ideas. To draw an analogy, imagine walking into a hall containing 80,000 people split up into hundreds of small groups, each discussing a particular topic. You can wander from group to group, eavesdropping on people's conversations, perhaps even adding your own comments. That, in a nutshell, describes what CIX is all about.

When a user logs onto CIX, he can join one of hundreds of 'Conferences'. A conference is an area where people who are interested in a particular subject can go to speak to other like-minded people. For example, CIX contains an Amiga conference where anyone interested in the Amiga can speak to other Amiga users.

However, it doesn't stop there, oh no! Most conferences are further sub-divided into Topics. A topic is a precise subject for discussion within a conference. The Amiga conference contains topics on programming, CDTV, software, games, graphics and several other subjects.

KING FOR A DAY

Each conference has at least one 'Moderator'. The moderator is the person who takes responsibility for maintaining order within a conference, and he/she is usually the person who set it up in the first place. A moderator may also have to take responsibility for maintaining enthusiasm within a conference, especially if it covers an obscure topic. He may have to log on daily to make provocative or inspiring comments which will engender debate among members of the conference.

The majority of conferences available on CIX are 'Open', that is to say anyone can join them at any time. However, there are also a number of 'Closed' conferences which are usually set up by companies as a place for authorised people to 'talk shop' without fear of possibly sensitive information being divulged to the general public. Many companies use closed conferences as a convenient place for developers and product testers to communicate with each other. If you want to, you can ask a conference moderator for access to a closed conference, and if he gives you permission, you

S BY PHONE

will then be able to enter the conference as an authorised member.

Although any subscriber can set up and moderate a conference, a moderator has God-like status within his own conferences. He shapes it, and can decide what is and isn't acceptible. He has total control over the behaviour of the group, for instance some moderators allow swearing and personal abuse, others do not.

Even if the conference is an open one, a moderator can permanently deny access to anyone he chooses. This right is sometimes exercised to stop particularly annoying or offensive subscribers from entering a conference and aggravating the other users! So try not to annoy him.

MESSAGE PADS

When you have joined a topic within a conference, you will be able to read all messages that have been posted (left) within that topic.

Each message is numbered for easy access, and the first message in a topic is usually from the conference moderator describing the proposed subject for discussion in the topic.

When a message is posted, the identity of the person posting the message is given so that other users know who's saying what. When a conference member wishes to say something, he is prompted for a title to his remark, this title will then appear at the start of his message. When subsequent members wish to remark on something that has already been said, they must 'comment' on the message they wish to remark upon.

For example, Joe Smith joins the Amiga/Graphics topic and posts a message titled '*D- Paint* Fonts' in which he asks if anyone knows how to install fonts on *D-Paint*. Once his message has been posted, it's available for everyone to read. Now let's suppose Jane Jones reads his message and she wishes to reply to it. Having just read Joe's message Jane types 'Comment', then proceeds with her reply. If a subsequent user also wishes to make a remark about Joe's original enquiry, he can also do so by commenting to it. Furthermore, he can comment on Jane's comment!

Obviously, this could easily become confusing, so to avoid this CIX has a special feature called 'Referencing'. By switching reference mode on, a user can start with an original message, then chronologically read all comments to that message, and comments to the comments, and so on, ad infinitum.

The original message, and any comments that derive from it, are collectively known as a thread (a thread of conversation, geddit?). Most topics will contain numerous threads all running concurrently, and therefore it's very important to be able to negotiate them easily. Because CIX is a subscription service (you pay for every minute that you're on-line), most people don't try and read the different threads on-line. They use a handy piece of software known as an off-line reader ('OLR' for short). This keeps track of all threads and lets subscribers read at their leisure, free of the worry of either phone bills or CIX fees.

OLR WARS

At the moment, there is only one Amiga OLR available (Amiga Query), but due to dissatisfaction about its reliability, two CIX members are currently writing replacement programs. Following the Commodore tradition, they have both been given proper names (Lucy and Nicola), and since their announcement, there has been a good deal of friendly rivalry between the program's authors.

There are hundreds of conferences on CIX, and although the majority are in some way related to the PC world, there are dozens of general interest subjects ranging from Star Trek to Punk Rock, from Gerbils to Evolution and from Amiga to Asimov. Each conference has a different 'personality', and this is dictated by the people in it. Some of the serious PC conferences are so formal and snooty that one slight transgression can get you ostracised from them, other conferences (the Amiga ones included) are so relaxed that you could slander the moderator's mother and still notice no bad feeling.

The tone of a conference is often tightly regulated by the moderator, who has the power to remove undesirable messages if he/she wants to.

A REAL GOOD EGG

One of the most active conference moderators is a really friendly guy named Dave Winder, who moderates more than 40 conferences and seems to spend most of his life on CIX! It is he who moderates the Amiga conference, and his irrepressible sense of humour and good-will radiates a glow of friendship throughout the entire conference.

That's not to say that fierce arguments don't sometimes spring up — they do! On one recent occasion a chap voiced some rather strong and ill-informed opinions and he promptly found himself at the start of a long and, at times, vindictive thread of criticism.

This only goes to show that it sometimes takes courage to voice an opinion on CIX! Of course, if you don't want to get involved, you don't have to. You can simply read everyone else's messages from the safety and anonymity of your computer screen. Cixen (members of CIX) have a special word for electronic voyeurs; they call them 'Lurkers', people who only ever lurk in the shadows too apathetic or nervous to become involved. [*What's wrong with hiding in the shadows wearing your best mac whilst spying on someone – Ed.*]

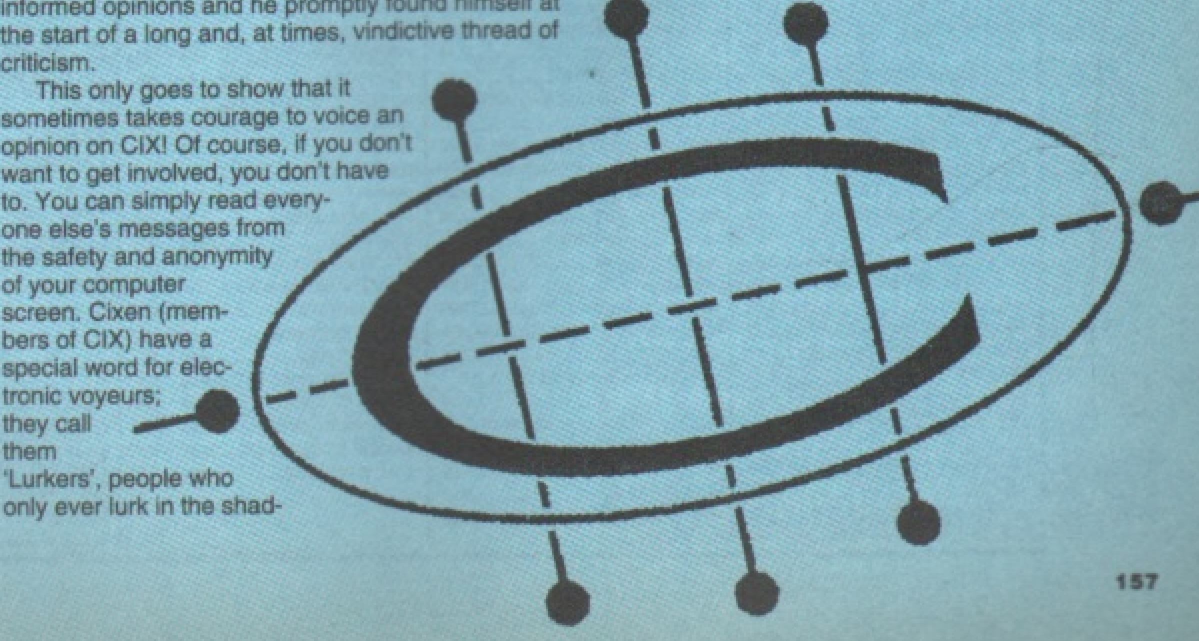
AFAIK IT'S CODE

Speaking of special words, you'll find that Cixen have an entire system of codes much like those used on CB radio. For the most part, these codes have been developed to save typing long and frequently used phrases, for example 'IMHO' = In My Humble Opinion or 'AFAIK' = As Far As I Know. There is even a specially developed set of character graphics known as 'Smileys' which are used to convey the mood of a message poster. For example, ':-)' means 'I'm happy' or 'I'm joking, don't take what I just said seriously' and ';-)' is the graphic equivalent of saying 'Nudge, nudge, wink, wink, say no mooore!'

One thing that can be said about most conferences (especially the technical ones), is that they contain a great number of experts, most of whom are only too happy to give advice to professional and amateur alike. The Amiga conference is intermittently visited by Commodore and such programming gurus as Jez San and Jeff Minter. The Star Trek conference is kept regularly updated with information that even the official fan clubs don't have access to. You'll even find that CUAmiga has a conference! That's right, by typing in 'jo cuamiga' you'll be able to leave messages for our letters page or join in the 'general' area where anything goes. We've not had the manpower to keep it up to date in recent months, but from now on we will try and answer questions within one working day.

If you want to enter a whole new world of conversation, education and humour, log onto CIX as soon as you can, but be warned, it's frighteningly addictive! And you'll soon find yourself dreading the quarterly 'phone bill.

For more information on CIX, call the CIX Customer Liason Department on 081 390 8446.



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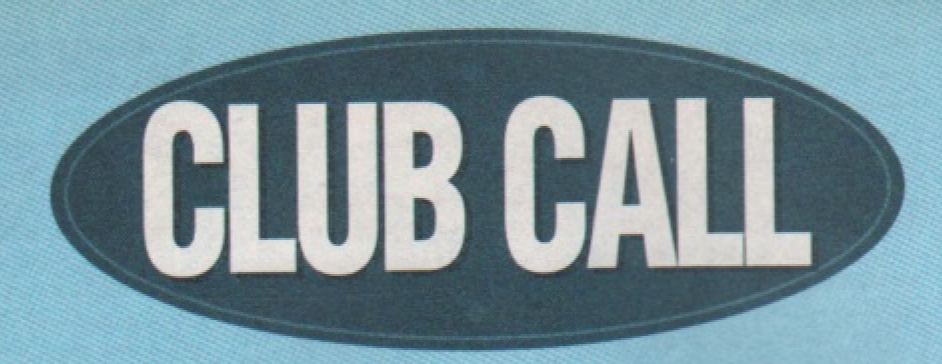
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For airing ideas, posing problems and sharing solutions an Amiga club can help you get to grips with your favourite computer. If you haven't joined one yet read on and learn more.

AMIGA 500+ CLUB
3 Islay Court, Irvine, Ayrshire KA11 4JQ.

Clearly committed to providing its members with access to the sort of hardware and software they might not otherwise be able to use, the Amiga 500+ Club has recently purchased a realtime frame grabber to complement its colour video camera. The range of facilities now available includes assistance in getting both colour IFF and HAM files for use with DTP programs, and the conversion of slides, negatives, photographs, video and cine film. These services are free to members, who only have to pay for a disk and postage. Completely free off-line printing will also be provided following the purchase of an H.P. IIIP laser printer. The club plans to set up a bulletin board in the near future.

AMIGA USER'S GROUP (FYLDE)
25 Glen Eldon Road, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire FY8 2AX.

Here is a Lancastrian club which certainly believes in keeping in touch with its membership. Firstly, it compiles NewsDisk, a monthly on-disk magazine containing articles by members, hardware and software reviews, programming tips, PD programs, listings of second-hand goods for sale, and news about forthcoming meetings and Amiga-related events. Secondly, it provides a telephone advice line aiming to solve equipment and software problems and help with purchasing decisions.

Membership, including a subscription to the NewsDisk, is available for £15 a year (£8.50 for six months), which goes towards covering the costs of this non-profit-making club. Members with modems can also access the Red Rose Bulletin Board, based in Preston, for an extra £7.50 a year. For a membership application form and further details contact Andy Wilkinson at the above address.

AMOS PROGRAMMERS CLUB
6 Brassey Avenue, Broadstairs, Thanet, Kent CT10 2DS.

A recently-established club which, as its name suggests, hopes to assist people learning the AMOS programming language, and provide a forum in which AMOS users may swap ideas. The club organiser compiles a disk magazine for members that includes example programs, samples and, naturally, help with AMOS. Future plans include the establishment of a free PD network to allow members to exchange programs. Details from the above address.

COMMODORE AMIGA USERS GROUP
85 Highfields Road, Witham, Essex CM8 1LW.

Although this club is interested in more than gaming, it started just over a year ago when a group of friends gathered to run competitions on *Kick Off II* and *Stunt Car Racer*. Hundreds of cheats are currently being compiled by the club and put on disk, making just the sort of reference material keen gamers are eager to get hold of. The 30 members also share PD programs and magazines, and an on-disk newsletter is going to be published soon. Somehow I don't think that it will challenge CU.

GLASGOW SPORTS LEAGUE
28 Stamperland Hill, Clarkston, Glasgow G76 8AF.

Not yet up and running, the Glasgow Sports League (a provisional name) hopes to become a fully-fledged football league for devotees of *Sensible Soccer*. All the League needs before kick-off is more members, so computer-footy fans take note. The League will be a non-profit-making club, but will charge membership fees to finance trophies and prizes. The fees are set at £10 per season for Seniors (over 16s that is), £5 for Juniors and £12.50 for Family membership (one senior and one junior). Membership grants entry to the Glasgow League, the Glasgow Cup and a Goal of the Season contest. Members will also receive a monthly newsletter.

If you're sick as a parrot about your on-screen sports fixtures, but are over the moon about *Sensible Soccer* and would like more information on the League, send a large stamped self-addressed envelope to the above address. Altogether now: One *Sensi Soccer*. There's only one *Sensi Soccer*...

THE GURU MASTERS
111 Sherborne Road, Bushbury, Wolverhampton WV10 9EU.

An unusually-named club which is actually a demo group producing utility and demo compilations, digitised slideshows, sampled songs and remixes (they are currently working with some songs by a group called Purple Mouse, which I am assured are very funny). In existence for two years, and with a membership of twenty, The Guru Masters are working towards full coding of demos and would particularly welcome new members with knowledge of this field, and of music and graphics. Enquiries should be directed to 'The Sheriff' at the above address.

THE KENT YOUTH COMPUTER GROUP
The North Youth Centre, Essellar Road, Ashford, Kent.

In September this club moved its meeting place to a purpose-built computer room at the above address. Meetings take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays, between 6.30pm and 9.30pm, with a 50p entry fee (40p to existing youth club members). Other computers are covered besides the Amiga.

NORWICH MASKED HEROES
278 Aylsham Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR3 2RG.

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's an East Anglian Amiga club! Aiming to help local Amiga users, whatever their computing problems, the Norwich Masked Heroes boast a membership ranging in age from 12 to 72. An on-disk magazine is available to members who supply a disk for it to be copied onto. Contributions to the magazine are invited, so if you have any ideas, or just want to join the club yourself, write to the above address for further details.

THE PERTH AND DISTRICT AMATEUR COMPUTER SOCIETY
14 Imrie Place, Hillyland, Perth PH1 2QN.

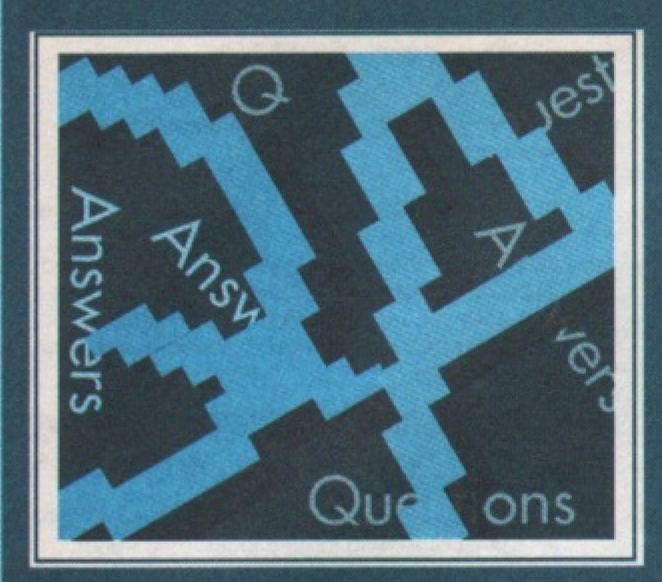
Covering the Perth (Tayside) area rather than the Perth (Australia) region, this club meets every month and supports all types of Amiga and other varieties of computer. Talks are given on a range of subjects interesting to Amiga-users, such as the pros and cons of buying a CDTV, animation, MIDI, programming and info on the best hard drive to purchase. Demonstrations are performed, advice is available for those having problems with their computers, and members may use the Society's PD library. A bulletin board is also being established. Membership costs £6 per annum and further details of this club may be obtained by sending an S.A.E. to the above address.

SAINT-LO 16.32 MICRO
132 Rue Jean-Follain, 50 000 Saint-Lo, France

The club meets on a monthly basis and publishes a fanzine entitled 'The Fun Flash Cool II'. In spite of its name it is written entirley in French. If your linguistic skills are up to it you can obtain further details from the address above.

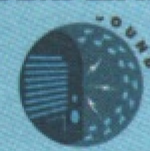
GET IN TOUCH!

If you run a club specifically aimed at the Amiga owner, get in touch. We'll promote your club through these pages, as well as provide a free subscription to CU Amiga. Send all entries to: Dan Slingsby, Amiga Clubs, CU Amiga, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, Farringdon, London, EC1R 3AU.



CU's resident knight in shining armour rides forth on his white steed (well, beige at least!) to put an end to your Amiga problems.

POTTY AMPLIFIER



I would like to comment upon the DIY article in your September issue. I think that they are a good idea as hardware costs so much. I was particularly interested in the Audio Amplifier so, with Maplin's catalogue in hand, I worked out the cost of the components needed. It only came to £7, very cheap compared to other sound systems.

I was just about to place an order for the parts listed when I noticed that there were six pins on the potentiometer (pot) in the illustration, but the list stated that a 10kohm logarithmic pot was needed. As far as I know, they have three pins (like the one in the photograph in the article) and not six, so what happens to the other three wires?

Steven Clugston, Trofarth, North Wales

You're right, the illustration does show a six pin pot as opposed to the three pin version shown in the photograph. The reason for this is that dual pots (six pins) are far easier to get hold of than the single version itemised in the parts list. If you use a dual version, the other three pins should be left unconnected as they aren't required.

STICKY BOX HELP



I'm writing in response to the 'Sticky Box' tutorial that was featured in your July issue. Being an electronics technician, the project was well within my capabilities and I duly assembled it. However there are some hidden pitfalls for Amiga users not intimately associated with chips and a soldering iron:

1. The board supplied has got holes in it to join the tracks between one side and the other. This cuts the cost of manufacturing the PCBs. The final design may not work if the two chip holders are only soldered to the bottom of the board. Try to solder the tops of the legs of the IC holders as there are about four tracks which may be 'open circuit' on completion of the unit.

2. The legend on top of the PCB relating to the two LCDs is back to front. To clarify that statement, the flat of the LED should be facing towards the Integrated Circuit.

3. The manufacturing quality of the board I received was quite low, and I found that a couple of the tracks were broken. These can easily be repaired by touching a section of tinned copper wire across the offending track.

4. The box may not work with analogue joysticks. This phenomena occurs because the box uses pin 5 as a connection to ground. Amigas use this pin to connect to the potentiometer within the analogue stick, so a voltage will be present which will affect the grounding of the board.

TIP: Solder all connections to both sides of the board (with the exception of the two plugs – it's impossible!!). Buzz all the tracks from one place to another to check the continuity, thus identifying broken tracks, bad joints, etc.

C.J.Terry, Gravesend, Kent

Thank you for your tips. If anyone is interested, our DIY feature returns next issue where we'll be undertaking a number of different projects.

PARTS PROBLEM



I went to London to buy the parts to make the pause switch in your September issue, but I couldn't find them anywhere. Can you tell me where to get them from please?

Steven Summers, Redhill, Worcester

W.H. Smiths sells the Maplin's catalogue, and from there you can order any electronics components you could possibly require. Alternatively, you can contact them directly at Maplin Electronic Supplies Ltd, 284 London Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex. Tel: 0702 554000.

A530 MUSINGS



Having recently taken an interest in Amiga hardware, I was hoping that you could answer the following questions:

1. Will the GVP A530 Turbo hard drive be A500+ compatible?

2. Is it possible to upgrade to eight megabytes of Chip RAM on either a 1.3 or 2.0 Amiga with the A530 fitted?

3. Are GVP working on some kind of Chip memory expansion for the A530's mini-slot?

4. As far as *D-Paint IV* is concerned, how much more effective is 32-bit wide Fast RAM in running large animations (compared to Chip RAM)?

5. Same question as above but with 32-bit wide Chip RAM?

6. Animations in *D-Paint IV* run at a maximum of 30 frames per second. Is 50 FPS possible using an accelerator?

7. I have in mind the following set-up: A530 with four megabyte of 32-bit wide Chip RAM, eight megabytes of 32-bit wide fast RAM, 120 Mb hard drive and a maths processor. Is such an arrangement possible on an A500 or 500+?

D.White, Walsall, West Midlands

Taking your questions in order:

1. Yes, the A530 is Amiga 500+ compatible. It automatically installs an appropriate Workbench when you first initialise it.

2. It isn't possible to upgrade to eight megabytes of Chip RAM on ANY Amiga. On 2.0 machines the limit is two megabytes, for all others it's one megabyte.

3. There's no need for a mini-slot expansion as the A530 lets you add up to eight megs (Fast RAM) of SIMMS internally anyway.

4. As far as I know, *D-Paint IV* is no more efficient in handling animations with an accelerator fitted, although obviously using the full 8 Mb upgrade potential of the drive means that you can have larger animations than usual.

5. There's no such thing as 32-bit wide chip RAM on the A530. All SIMMS added to it are Fast RAM.

6. *D-Paint IV* is able to run animation at up to 60 frames per second anyway, however this speed is not improved by an accelerator.

7. Bearing in mind the fact that you can't have four megabytes of Chip RAM, the rest is exactly the same as the set-up I have on both my 1.3 A500 and 2.04 A500+ computers. A great set-up! I tend to think of the A500+ set-up as a poor man's A3000 (even though the A530 runs faster than a standard 3000!).

UPGRADE UNCERTAINTY



I have an Amiga 500 and I am thinking of buying a hard drive. The only thing is I won't have the money until early next year, and I was wondering if it would be a better bet to upgrade to a higher model which already includes a hard drive?

I use the Amiga mainly for games and word processing, although in the past few months I've also become interested in programming. Bearing these facts in mind, would it be best to buy a hard drive, an A600 HD, a 1500 and hard drive, or should I wait and see what the new Amigas are going to be like?

Incidentally, I have designed a replacement Workbench, what's the best way of getting public domain distribution for it?

Chris Youle, Malden, Essex

There are some very impressive hard drives available for the A500, and unless you require the expansion facilities of a machine such as the 1500, 2000 or 3000 there's no point in spending additional money on one of them.

If you think that you are likely to require expansion slots for peripherals such as *PC-Emulators*, 12/16 bit samplers, 24-bit cards, etc. then it would be wise to choose a machine accordingly.

With the imminent release of the A4000, prices for the 3000 range of Amigas have plummeted to less than 50% of their previous levels.

Currently, the only new Amiga to be released in this country by the new year looks like being the A4000, a high-spec, high-end machine which is almost certainly going to be outside your price range in any case.

As for getting PD distribution for your program, the easiest way is simply to send copies to any PD Companies that take your fancy. The 17-Bit and Fred Fish libraries are among the largest in the world and will probably provide you with the widest possible audience.

SUPERJAM! SUSPICION



I've been trying to make music using my MIDI keyboard and a sequencer. Presently I'm using *OctaMED* and *Protracker*, but they both suffer from the same problem: namely that there is a slight delay between pressing a key on my keyboard, and the note appearing on-screen. This makes it impossible to synchronise my playing with drum loops, etc.

I've been thinking about buying *SuperJam!*, but is it any good, or does it suffer from the same problem?

R. Guorntuspath, Norway

I'm not familiar with the problems you've mentioned, but I know that *SuperJam!* isn't the answer. Although *SuperJam!* is an excellent program, it isn't a sequencer, and won't be able to do what you want.

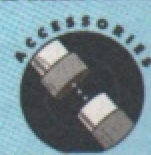
Greatly simplifying its capabilities, *SuperJam!* is a rhythm creator rather like the auto-rhythm sections on most modern electronic keyboards. It contains dozens of styles, and these can be modified both subtly and crudely. It's designed so that you can quickly work out a riff or accompaniment part for any songs you may be composing. It's also great fun (for a while at least...).

At the moment, your choice is between *Music X, Dr T's KCS, Bars and Pipes* and *Sequencer One*. *Dr T's* is the most professional and expensive of the packages, whilst *Bars and Pipes* is a much more user-friendly rival. *Music X* is well regarded by many musicians, but it's a little dated compared to the previous two packages. *Sequencer One* is a very popular budget package that may be adequate for beginners, but professionals will probably find it lacking.

You may find it worth waiting for either *Music-X version 2* (no release date specified), or *Rave* (a very promising new budget package that is both powerful and easy to use which is due for imminent release).

For more about *Dr T's*, *SuperJAM!* and *Bars and Pipes* contact Zone Distribution at 5 Abbeville Road, London, SW4 9LA. Tel: 071 738 5444. For information on Rave and *Music-X 1.1* and *2.0* contact The Software Business, Cromwell Business Centre, New Road, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE17 4BG. Tel: 0480 496497. Contact Gajits for *Sequencer One* at I-Mex House, 40 Princess Street, Manchester, M1 6DE. Tel: 061 236 2515.

HIGH DENSITY DILEMMA



I'm currently trying to connect a high density drive to my Amiga 500. Can you tell me whether new chips or interface cards are required, and if so where can they be obtained? I thought it may simply be a matter of connecting it with a non-standard disk drive cable?

I'm quite useful at electronics/programming, so any solutions involving either of the above will be useful.

The drive that I'm trying to connect is manufactured by Chinon, and carries the product code 'FZ-357'. It functions perfectly when used with normal floppy disks, but gives up the ghost when used with HD ones.

Why have no third party manufacturers released high density drives for the Amiga, as I'm sure there is a market for them? Commodore now supply such drives as standard on their top of the range models. I wonder when they will filter through to ordinary mortals who own lesser machines.

Stuart Brayne, Sheffield

I'm very surprised that the drive worked at all on your Amiga, but there is no way that you will get it to read or write in high density mode. You are correct in assuming that the drive requires special controller chips which are indeed fitted on some A3000 and A4000 systems. To the best of my knowledge, these chips cannot be bought separately, and even if they could I don't think that the A500's architecture is capable of supporting them.

ICONS IN DRAG





When I'm using my Amiga for long periods of time, I often drag commonly used applications such as *Pen Pal*, etc. onto the main Workbench screen. This is incredibly time saving and means that I don't have to clutter up my screen with dozens of windows. Is there a way that I can make this permanent and have a row of icons on the bottom of my screen on boot-up?

I'm in the process of buying a hard disk and I'm sure that this would be a far better system than opening loads of windows to get to my software.

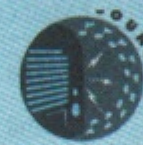
David Walker, East Harling, Norfolk

If you are using Workbench 2.0, icons can be moved out of their windows (without actually changing their location within the directory structure of a disk). Simply drag the required icons to their new location (i.e. the Workbench screen in your case) and select 'Leave Out' from the 'Icons' menu. To position the icons in a row along the bottom of the screen simply drag them there then select 'Snapshot/All' from the 'Window' menu.

If you are loading Workbench from floppy disk and you have relocated all of your program icons so that they appear on the Workbench screen, clicking on any of them will mean that you must insert the appropriate program disk in order to load anything. Hard drive owners won't have this problem because the various programs will presumably be installed on their drives.

If you are using Workbench 1.2/1.3 there is no way to relocate icons other than by physically changing the location of their associated programs/data on the disk.

CHIP MUSIC



I have just started to use my Amiga to make music and although I have tried various samples I much prefer the Commodore 64-style 'chip-music' that you often hear in PD demos and some games. The problem is, I can't find any programs which support chip music. Are there any such programs available (PD or commercial)? How big is the demand for chip music among Amiga owners?

Ollie Doughty, Popley 1, Hampshire

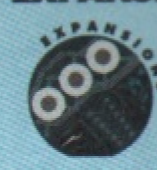
If by 'chip' music you are referring to the rasping sounds generated by the Commodore 64, it is possible to create a comparable noise (!) on the Amiga using its internal sound generator. A number of packages support this feature and even let you define the composition of the waveform to be used.

The only real advantage to creating music in this way is the great memory saving over using sampled sounds. Most Amiga users do NOT find the quality of such sounds acceptable to them, and therefore prefer to suffer the memory overhead of using samples.

If you are determined to use this inferior method of making music you can use any of the following packages to do so: *MED, OctaMED, TFMX, Sonix* or *Future Composer*.

I would strongly suggest that you acquire some decent samples, because I'm certain that you'll find something satisfactory if you try. The C64 uses a few basic waveforms such as sine and square waves to create its sounds. There are decent Amiga samples available that use these waveforms far more effectively. Try to acquire the instrument disks that accompany *Master Soundtracker*. They're called ST-01 and ST-02 and you should find them more than enough to get you going. Try contacting any PD library, as most stock them.

RAM EXPANSIONS



I'm thinking of expanding the memory of my A500+ to three megabytes. Is this possible internally, and if so how much will it cost? If it isn't possible, how much will an external expansion cost?

I would also be grateful if you can also possibly recommend a good external disk drive?

George Mackay, Thurso, Caithness

As yet, I don't think that there are any internal expansions which will take an A500+ beyond two megabytes. 1.2/1.3 owners can use the AddRAM 540 to expand their machines internally up to six megabytes. You can get further details on this by contacting Silica Systems at 1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX. Tel: 081 309 1111.

You can buy an external expansion for the A500 and 500+ which will let you add up to eight megabytes of additional RAM, and simply plugs into the expansion port at the side of the computer. They cost between £112.99 for a two megabyte version and £259.99 for an eight megabyte model. Find out more by contacting Evesham Micros, Unit 9, St Richard's Road, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 6XJ. Tel: 0386 765500.

Also, Cumana make a very reliable external disk drive for about £60 and the Power Computing range of drives are equally very popular. You can buy the Cumana from Silica Systems (see their address earlier). Power Computing are at Unit 8, Railton Road, Woburn Industrial Estate, Kempston, Bedford, MK42 7PN. Tel: 0234 843388.

HELPLINE HAND

If you can help with any of the unanswered questions raised this month, or you have any useful advice or tips for fellow users, please take the time to write in. Your contribution really does matter.

Alternatively, if you have any questions (not about games please – send them to Play to Win), drop me a line. The address is: Mat Broomfield, Q&A, CU Amiga, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

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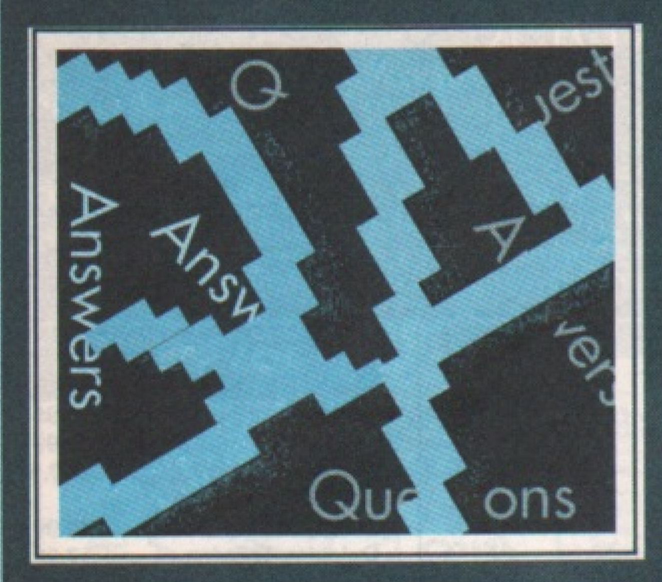
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PRINTERS SPECIAL

I receive far more letters concerning printers than on any other subject. To be honest, at least 50% of these questions could be answered if people would simply read through the manual that comes with their printer, or refer to the relevant sections in the Workbench manuals. However, I appreciate that printer manuals can be hard to understand, especially for beginners, so this month I'll be answering as many printer-related questions as I can get through.

WHICH PRINTER?

I'm thinking of purchasing a printer. My price range is £200 to £400. Could you please recommend a few models? Colour would be nice, if possible.
Peter Getham, Oswestry, Salop

I use a Canon BJ-10e and buying it was the best move I ever made. It uses bubble-jet technology to give monochrome (black, white and grey) print at a resolution of 360 DPI (dots per inch). It's great with graphics, DTP and ordinary text, although at 83 CPS (Characters Per Second) it has quite a low print speed. The newer BJ-10ex is slightly better because it's Epson compatible and is supplied with more fonts on-board. The Star SJ-48 is also based on the Canon BJ10 engine, so quality is pretty much the same. Choose whichever one is the cheapest.

As for monochrome dot matrix printers, the Star LC200 and the Citizen Swift 24 both have similar specs, and provide reasonable output, although not at the same high-quality as the bubble-jets. The Citizen is easier to get started, and is more user-friendly, but the Star has some really nice fonts built in. You can also buy font cartridges for the Swift at about £35 each. Both printers are much faster and noisier than the bubble jets, and are considerably cheaper to run.

For colour, the Star LC200C and the Citizen Swift 24 Colour are again comparable. They're OK for spot colour and printing graphics for home and amateur use, but their dot matrix nature means that colour mixing is not too convincing and print-outs are often quite streaky (they have bands of light or dark running across them). Citizen now provide a special Amiga driver and printing software which vastly improves its performance, giving it a slight edge over Star's offering. However, to get the ultimate performance from any colour dot matrix printer you should really consider specialised graphics printing software such as *Flexidump*. In my opinion, this software is so essential that it should be bundled with every colour printer sold to an Amiga owner!

When you look at colour bubble jet printers, apart from the HP Deskjet, you're talking about serious money. The Deskjet prints at 300 DPI, and it's fine for home and semi-professional use. The colour mixing is far better than its dot matrix rivals, but like all colour bubble/ink-jet printers, it's quite expensive to run. The HP Paintjet still costs about £1000, and the results, at only 180DPI, do not justify its price tag. It is far better to do colour separations on a monochrome bubble jet and get twice the resolution. Of course, the Canon BJC-800 gives much better results for just under £2000, and for a cool £2999 you can get 24-bit photographic quality prints from the HP XL300.

If you ever go to computer auctions, you can sometimes pick up laser printers for £300 and less, and although these give excellent results, the ink cartridges can be extremely expensive.

T-SHIRT PRINTER

I'm creating a range of designs on my 2000 for printing on T-shirts. Can you tell me which printer to buy in order to do this?
Jeff Chan, Holland

You need special ink for printing on T-shirts, and at the moment this ink is only available on ribbons from Care Electronics (who also sell *Flexidump*). I believe these ribbons are only available for the Star and Citizen range of printers, but phone Care on 0923 66234 for confirmation or further details.

RESTLESS RIBBONS

Care Electronics sell a colour upgrade kit for mono printers. Does it have three or four separate ribbon cartridges which need swapping every time the printer makes a pass? If this is the case, then isn't it a bit impractical for printing anything larger than a postage stamp?
Steven Clugston, Trofarth, North Wales

Yes, it does have four ribbons which need to be inserted for the separate passes. However, you seem to have misunderstood the meaning of the expression 'passes'. A pass does not mean printing one single line of colour then changing ribbons, rather it refers to the way that Flexidump will print an entire screen using one coloured ink before you must change the ribbon and repeat the process for each of the colours that are required to build up an image.

Of course, you're right, the process does take much longer than if you were to use a colour printer in the first place, but with *Flexidump*, mono printer owners don't have to pay hundreds of pounds for a colour printer merely so they can print the occasional screen.

A500+ LASER PRINTER

I have some money to spend, and I was thinking of purchasing a laser printer. I started to look through some catalogues to find a printer that would work on my A500+, but I couldn't find any. I need a reasonably priced printer for both graphics and wordprocessing, so could you please tell me which printers (if any) will work on my computer, and any additional things such as drivers I'll need? Finally can you recommend somewhere to buy it all from?
R. Jarvis, West Bromwich, West Midlands

In general, printers are not designed to work with any specific computers, therefore any printer that uses the serial or parallel port (99% of them do) will work to some degree with your A500+. Most laser printers have advanced features not found on dot matrix printers, some of which you may not be able to access from your Amiga. For example, some printers use a page description language called PCL5, whilst others use Postscript which can only be used with certain Amiga programs.

You will still be able to use the basic features such as text and graphics printing, text styling, etc. you just won't be using the printer to its maximum potential.

To use any printer with the Amiga, you will need an appropriate driver. Check your extras disk or Amiga manual to see which ones are available to you, then try to buy a printer which can emulate one of these. You should be able to find a decent laser printer for £600 to £800.

Silica Systems sell a range of laser printers. For advice or further information ring them on 081 309 1111.

WORDWORTH PRINTER FONTS

A number of readers have written in asking about how to use their printer's fonts with Digita's page publishing package *Wordworth*. The main manual supplied with the program is surprisingly reticent about this feature, although registered users should have received a booklet titled 'Upgrade notes to instruction book 1.1' which explains this subject a little (owners of the 1.1 version should have received these instructions when they bought the program).

To clarify the situation:

Wordworth can use four types of fonts: monochrome bit-maps (standard Amiga fonts), ColourFonts (also bit-mapped), Compugraphic (scalable) fonts and printer fonts (both standard and scalable [Postscript]).

If you have a Postscript printer (probably a laser or high-end bubble jet), you will have access to a default selection of 35 Adobe typefaces, and these should appear in the font requester.

If you are using a non-Postscript printer, you will need to specify exactly which one you're using not JUST in Workbench Preferences, but in the printer install program provided with *Wordworth*. This program contains a list of over 400 popular printers, and each entry in the list contains information about the fonts and pitches (sizes) that a particular printer is capable of producing. If your printer doesn't appear in the list, chances are it's because it doesn't support multiple fonts. If in doubt, you could try selecting a compatible model instead.

When you've used the *Printer Install* program, your printer's fonts will be listed in black in the Fonts requester and will usually be prefixed with the name of your printer, i.e. Star-Courier24, Canon-Roman17, Citizen-Helvetica15, etc. If you select one of these fonts, *Wordworth* will use a comparably sized bit-mapped font to display on the screen, but the selected printer font will be used if the document is printed via the NLQ or NLQ+Graphics printing options.

If your printer doesn't contain extra fonts, you can still use *Wordworth's* bit-mapped or Compugraphic ones to add variety to a document. By printing a document using one of the Ultraprint options, these fonts can be printed at a much higher quality than ordinary bit-mapped fonts usually produce.

MUDDY COLOURS

When I come to print colour screens from *D-Paint III* using my Hewlett Packard Deskjet (which you rated as the best all-round printer for DTP use), the colours on the paper appear much duller than those on the monitor.

At first I thought it was the paper causing the inks to merge with one another, so I bought some of HP's special coated paper but that didn't improve the situation at all. Then I tried using the colour correction options from preferences, but that made no difference either.

I spoke to Hewlett Packard about the problem, and they suggested that there was something wrong with my printer driver, but I'm using the correct one. I don't mind altering my existing driver if needs be. Can you help?

Timothy N. Clark, Uckfield, East Sussex

I'm afraid you've encountered one of the harsh realities of Amiga printing, i.e. it never looks the same on paper as it does on the screen.

Hewlett Packard have a cheek suggesting that your driver was at fault, as they know about this problem on PCs as well as the Amiga. In fact they've just made a big fuss about releasing the first 'True colour' driver for PCs and Apple Macs which compensates for the way that screen colours are interpreted on paper.

I think that the root of the problem comes from the difference in the way that colours are generated on the screen and on paper. On paper, the printer adds a combination of the three ink primaries (magenta, cyan and yellow) until the desired colour is created (black may also be used to produce shading). Therefore a maximum amount of these primaries produces the colour black.

On the screen, the computer subtracts primaries in different amounts to reach a specified colour. The screen primaries are red, green and blue and the maximum mixture of these produces the colour white.

System Insight produce special colour enhancement paper which greatly improves the brightness of all colours (from bubble jet printers), and I wholeheartedly recommend using this. Contact them at 120 Wordsworth Court, Middlefield, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 0EF. Tel: 0727 827200.

An even better solution is to use *Flexidump* from Care Electronics. I know I seem to be mentioning this package in response to virtually every letter about printing, but as I've said before, you should consider it to be as important as your printer's power cable!

***Flexidump* features a special menu which you can use to adjust the brightness of the printed colours until they match those on the screen. It also features Gamma correction (for colour optimisation) and comes in two versions – one for bubble-jet printers and the other for dot matrix.**

CAN IT COLOUR?

I was hoping to upgrade from my Citizen Swift 24 to a Deskjet 500 and I was wondering if it can do colour separations in the same way as the Canon BJ-10ex can, or do I have to fork out an extra £200 for a colour version of the printer?

Keir Wilkinson, Surbiton, Surrey

Yes, it can do colour separations as can, in principle, any monochrome printer. Contact System Insight (address in previous answer) for colour inks/cartridges.

CAN'T PRINT/ WON'T PRINT

I've just bought a Star LC-20 printer and despite all my efforts I cannot get it to print. I keep getting a message from the Amiga about being unable to open the parallel drive (or something!).

I've tried using all the Epson drivers listed in the Workbench but nothing seems to work and I'm really stuck. I read the letter about another reader's LC-10 in the August edition, to which you told him to use the EpsonX(CBM-MPS-1250) driver and set his printer to Epson emulation, but I don't know how to do this. So far my printer has been unused and I'm afraid that I've wasted my money.

Barry Simpson, Glasgow, Scotland

Let's start by getting your printer's emulation mode set: Inside or on the printer there should be two banks of tiny switches called DIP (Dual Inline Programming) switches. These are used to specify numerous things about the way that it works, including its emulation mode. The first bank contains eight switches, whilst the other one contains four. Every switch in bank one should be set to On (the up position), whilst only the first and last in bank two should be on. Thanks to Ian Cook of Burnopfield for that information.

Now for your main problem. In order to print using Amiga preferences, a number of crucial files need to be correctly configured, and present on the disk from which you booted (loaded). These are: system-configuration, printer.device, parallel or serial.device (according to which interface you're using) and an appropriate driver.

The system configuration and .device files should be in the devs directory of your boot disk, whilst the driver should be in the printers sub-directory of devs. Whilst you may have to copy a suitable driver from another disk, the Workbench disk that comes with your Amiga will definitely contain the other files in the correct place (provided you haven't deleted them!).

Make a back-up copy of your Workbench disk, then using the preferences program included on it, configure the back-up to work with your printer. When you want to load a utility (e.g. a word processor), load the configured version of Workbench first, then load the required utility by either double clicking its icon, or using the CLI to load it by name. The utility will then automatically use whatever preferences you specified on the Workbench disk.

DRIVER ROUND UP

Various readers have requested info on printer drivers. So, here it is:

COMMODORE MPS 1550C
Requested by Gary Evans, Aberdare
I can find no specific reference to the 1550C, but the Workbench manual refers to two Commodore drivers, either of which may help. If the printer is Commodore MPS-1000 or IBM 5152 compatible use the MPS100 driver. If it is Epson compatible, try the EpsonX driver. Anyone know better?

STAR NL10
Requested by Steve Broadley, Newton, Nottingham
Although I've not encountered the NL10, most Stars can emulate some sort of Epson. If yours emulates an Epson with a Q in the title (LQ800, etc.) then use the EpsonQ driver. If it emulates one with an X in its name (FX80, etc) then use either the EpsonX(Old) or EpsonX(CBM-MPS1250) drivers.

CANON BJ130
Requested by Robert Burns, Ashstead, Surrey
There is a specific BJ130 driver, and it's available free from Canon. Phone them on 081 773 3173 to get a copy.

HELP NEEDED

There now follows a list of printers for which people require driver/DIP switch information. If you can help, please take the time to drop me a line.

OLIVETTI JP101
Requested by Steven Hinkins, Southgate, London

ANADEX MODEL C
Requested by G.Burton, Boston, Lincs

CENTRONICS 702
Requested by... ?? (someone whose writing is too bad to read his/her name!) of Great Costerton

OKIDATA MICROLINE 192 (ICL PLUS)
Requested by Basje Laaper, Amsterdam, Holland

OKIDATA MICROLINE 183
Requested by Ian Baker, Hartburn, Cleveland

CITIZEN 65X-140 PLUS
Requested by Dale Frameli, US Forces, USA

SHINWA AV-8052
Requested by Matthew Wood, Normanton, West Yorkshire

HONEYWELL R32
Requested by John McColl, Paisley, Scotland

DIGITAL LQP45 (Daisy wheel)
Requested by Robin Brown, Smithton, Inverness

BACKCHAT

SOUND IDEA

I am writing to enquire if the audio outputs in your Amigas are still working. Why? Well, in September's issue, out of 17 game reviews, only two mentioned the game's sound. Now that hardly inspires Amiga musicians to go out and create better quality soundtracks and sound effects, does it?

Out of an 800 word review surely 20 words could be spared to comment on the game's sound. Unfortunately, this is a trend developing in most major Amiga magazines. I can only hope CU Amiga re-takes the initiative and brings sound back into game reviews.
Jonathan Day, Gosport.

A good point Jonathan. Tinny, repetitive tunes and uninspired sound effects can certainly irritate. Conversely, well arranged music greatly enhances the atmosphere of a game, whilst creative use of sound effects add life to the events which unfold on-screen. Have we been remiss in our coverage of sound? Hopefully not in the future.

ROAD TO RUIN

Your reply to Steve Ellison's letter (*GB Route*, CU September 1992) concluded by saying that GB Route was all we had on the Amiga (as a route-finder). Well I've got something much better. *Auto-Route+* is available for the ST (uggh!). Use it through an ST emulator and it works very well. *GB Route* has only two 25k files for map data – *Auto-Route* has two full disks and the detail is outstanding! The tiniest hamlet is there. Get this – I asked *GB Route* for a map from Leicester to Lee (north Devon). I was sent to *Leeds*! *Auto-Route* gave me a choice of eight Lees and asked me to pick one.
Terry Williamson, Leicester.

But Terry, surely being hideously misdirected is just one of the many pleasures of road travel? The smell of the diesel, the roar of the juggernauts, the many hours of playing 'spot the workman' on the coned-off sections of the M1, the endurance test heralded by a 'No Services for 40 Miles' sign – all part of the romance of motoring. Happy times!

WHY DIY?

I was looking through the September issue when I read the letter from Darren Smith of Manchester complaining about the Amiga's speed. Much to my surpise, Mat Broomfield mentioned fitting a 68010 main processor instead of the usual 68000. He'd read this in 'Best Amiga Tricks and Tips' by Abacus. I've had this book for some time and in August I fitted a 68010 to my machine. I therefore have some advice to anybody doing the same – DON'T!

Why? For £25 and an hour's work the chip is fitted and then you see how much faster it is. Without careful timing you won't notice any difference whatsoever – my best estimates put the speed increase at between 3% and 6%. This is not even worth the effort of fitting the chip, let alone the cost of the device.

That warning aside, you also want opinions on the percentage system of scoring reviews. Speaking personally, I haven't even bothered looking at review percentages since they started using them in 'Sinclair User' days, because they always struck me as being figures pulled out of a hat – however impartial a reviewer pretends to be, his own prejudices will be colouring his scores. At least the text gives some idea of these prejudices. Best results would probably be obtained if at least two reviewers looked at each game and contributed to the review.

Anyway, keep up the good work. Your magazine has one of the best balances between technical subjects and joystick mauling, and it would be a pity to change.
Paul Kniblos, Loughborough, Leicestershire.

WHY, OH WHY, DIY?

Wow! DIY electronic projects for the Amiga (CU September 1992)! Out came my multimeter and pliers, etc, but as I began to scan the full five pages dedicated to this article my enthusiasm started to dwindle. Why? No circuit diagrams. The pages were covered with pretty isometric diagrams of switches and the witty text waffled on about Blue Peter and Captain Scarlet (ho-hum), but there were no circuit diagrams.

A circuit diagram would clarify even the simplest circuit, leaving no room for error. Before you say it, anybody not understanding circuit diagrams should not be performing open heart surgery on their Amiga anyway. With regard to clarity, may I refer to the diagram *Romswap #3* on page 29. If it is so 'essential that you wire it (the DPDT switch) correctly', why are you printing the diagram in mud brown on a black background?

You may think I am being far too fussy, but many people are going to risk the life of their Amiga for these projects. As far as your 'Blue Peter' DIL socket is concerned, I certainly wouldn't recommend it – the margin for error is far too high (dry joints, shorts, and so on). Ask yourself this: if somebody approached you with this project completed, with that bodge underneath, would you plug it into your Amiga? I could pick holes in your other projects (there are plenty of them), but I won't, I think I've made my point.

Changing topics completely, I would like to air my views on your 'Scores on the Doors' debate. By raising the issue you have made it clear that you are not happy with the current percentage scoring system and neither are many readers, including myself. The core issue is, therefore, what the replacement for this system should be. Whatever system is employed must, obviously, be stuck to from issue to issue and review to review for ease of reference. I am now going to offer my layout, very closely based on your current one, and would urge other readers to do the same. Hopefully you can then amalgamate all these suggestions and come up with a solution to please the majority.

The layout should consist of a large (1/8-1/4 page box) summary including the following:

Game title and price:
Most important.
Release date:
Who knows?
Genre:
Chaotic dwarf bashing (apologies to dwarves).
Team:
Spritely games.
Control:
Mouse, joystick, mouse/keyboard
Number of disks:
1-? Add comments on disk accessing/swapping problems, if any.
Hard disk installable:
Yes/no.
Number of players:
1-? Include any pros or cons of single/multi-player modes. Computer linking?
Memory:
512K, 1Mb.
Compatibility:
A500, A500+, A600, A3000...
Graphics:
Screen mode used, number of colours, use of colours.
Sound:
Intro themes: Good or bad? Long or short? Exact timed length?
Effects:
Are there any. If so – sampled/synth? Good or bad? Many or few?
Lastability:
How long, i.e. will you stop playing this game after two hours (*Epic*), one week, one month, one year, never (*Populous II*). Why?
Playability:
How fast does it play (can you keep up without a MegaStar 3 Turbomatic joystick)? Do you die too often?
Recommendations:
Should it only be played with two floppy drives for best results? Is there a better equivalent game?

AND PLEASE NO OVERALL MARK WHATSOEVER. LET THE READER DECIDE. If your reviews are accurate your readers will end up buying less junk and more quality software.
R.S. Barrow, Nottingham.

Thanks for the DIY game review layout. With regard to our own DIY, we respect that you are obviously quite competent with electronics and the projects may have been clearer to you if we had included the more traditional style of circuit diagram. Unfortunately, it isn't a prerequisite of using an Amiga that you have any familiarity whatsoever with electronics, so the diagrams were based around vero-board track layouts. These are a bit more complicated to decipher from the electronics point of view, but on the other hand they are a lot easier for people to build the projects from.

In a perfect world we could have printed both, but space constraints and the sheer volume of the information we tried to include in the feature conspired against us. We are sorry that you may not have been impressed with our efforts, but the whole point of the feature was that people who knew very little about electronics could complete these projects. Judging by the number of congratulatory letters we have received regarding the same article it would seem that we succeeded.

Meanwhile, back on the game review front, fierce skirmishing continues...

WORDS WORTH

It would seem that I am alone in finding the percentage scores a good idea. While they can be a little cloudy sometimes, they still seem to be the best way of expressing how good a game is. It would, however, appear that the system will change to 'good' and 'excellent', which, to my mind, is a great disadvantage. Surely the difference between 'good' and 'excellent' would be the same as the difference between, for example, 80% and 90%. There are also people who would like to make up their own minds without seeing the reviewer's final verdict.

I suggest that it would be a good idea to have two more separate pages included in the magazine. One could contain the reviewers' percentage scores and the other the 'good', 'excellent' comments. This would surely make everyone happy and also make it easier to compare games' scores.

Jon Whitcutt, Bradford on Tone, Somerset.

I think your scoring system, Jon, would amount to a rather unwieldy sideways jump. Divorcing the percentage scores (and/or 'good', 'awful' comments) from the reviews would make them irrelevant to anyone who hadn't first read the reviews to discover what types of game (shoot 'em up, strategy, platform, adventure, or whatever) were being graded. Needless flicking to and fro between pages would result.

Both Jon and R.S. Barrow seem to think that the overall percentage mark prevents readers from making up their own minds about the quality of a game. I thought the whole point of a games review was to show clearly what the reviewer thought of a game. Why does Paul complain about a review demonstrating a reviewer's prejudice – the review indicates how the game prejudiced the reviewer for or against it! Readers can follow or dismiss the critic's opinions depending on their view of his track record, comparisons made with games with which they are familiar, and so on. The overall impression left by a game is surely the single most important element of a review. If you are left knowing that the reviewer thought a game had 20% ('bad') sound and 90% ('excellent') graphics are you any wiser when it comes to deciding if the product is worth buying?

PAY UP, PAY UP, AND PLAY THE GAME

I am a woman of 35, intelligent, educated, and totally addicted to my Amiga computer games. I buy lots of games and magazines, spending more on this than anything else. I am not well off; I live alone with a huge mortgage and ordinary income. I do not begrudge a penny of the cost of my main interest and write because, having read and deliberated on all the 'reasons', excuses and statements relating to high game cost and piracy, I totally disagree with what appears to be the majority of gamers, who state that high prices lead to piracy and games should be cheaper.

Okay, I too would like, in a perfect world, for games to be much cheaper, but I do not expect something for nothing and certainly would not expect experts to work cheap or sacrifice their much-needed profits. I am sure some people in the computer game industry are wealthy as a result of their successful work, but they deserve it. Surely it's all a case of what your priorities are? I prefer to spend on this and can afford to as I don't have a car, holidays, alcohol, ciggies, expensive clothes, etc. Those who choose computer games also choose how they spend their money, and if they are unwilling to fully reimburse the manufacturers they should go without.

Arcade machines eat up money much faster than computer games, as do videos. If I buy a game for £26 and enjoy it for 200 hours I consider it excellent value and instead of complaining or seeking to escape payment I am grateful. I am self-employed and know what it's like when 'customers' try to utilise your abilities for cheap or for free with no respect for your needs. I wonder if the people who complain would still say games are too expensive if they received a percentage of the income.

Carmen Brulez, Ilford, Essex.

You make a good point, Carmen, in addition to reminding people that computer games are by no means exclusively adolescent and male. I think it is fair to say, however, that most computer gamers are of school age. Whilst they may accept the argument that a game is good value for money when the hours of enjoyment it provides are borne in mind, finding £26 (or more) as a lump sum with which to buy a recently-released game may be quite a challenge for many of them.

On the other hand, you may be right in considering computer piracy as being largely unrelated to the price of software. Home taping of music, the collecting of favourite TV programmes on video and photocopying useful sections from expensive books all seem to be condoned by large numbers (probably a majority) of people. Copyright infringement in all its forms does not attract sufficient condemnation for it to be discouraged. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that people take advantage of the ease with which games can be copied. Perhaps we all should follow the lead of the music industry and lobby for a tax to be levied on all blank disks. What do you think?

NO, DON'T LAUGH

How could you let the history of computing be published! My friend and I were sickened by your magazine's 'history' of computing. We have each owned a Texas Instruments TI-99/4A since 1982 and are members of the TI UK User Group. In fact, my friend is the Chairman and I'm the General Secretary of the group!

The true history of computing actually began in the 1930s, when John Karchner and Eugeen McDermott founded a company to manufacture seismic detection equipment. Following the invention of the transistor in 1947, a licence to manufacture them was obtained and a separate section of the company was set up. This offshoot was so successful that it was established as a company in its own right. This new company was named Texas Instruments.

In 1954, Texas Instruments built the first transistor radio (chew on that Motorola), and then, in 1958, they changed the world with the invention of the Integrated Circuit. In 1967 TI built the first handheld calculator. Up to the early 70s TI's inventions included efficient speech synthesis using Linear Predictive Coding, and a system of high speed graphics which you may be familiar with, called sprites! The most remarkable piece of silicon engineering ever launched was released by Texas Instruments in 1975. That was the world's first 16-bit RISC chip: the TMS9900. TI developed the design of the 9900 from their mini-computers (TM990), and they realised that with fewer instructions the instructions that remained would run many times faster. Furthermore the 9900 has no stack at all; instead it has a set of sixteen16-bit registers that can be anywhere in memory. When you need to execute a subroutine, the subroutine can have its own set of registers in a different area of memory which totally eliminates the need to save them. This is amazing for multitasking, and is far better than having a multitasking operating system. The other important feature of the 9900 is that it actually includes 32-bit multiply and divide instructions which should have made it the natural choice for computer applications, but the more popular chips strangled the market and profit took over again!

The 99/4A was launched in 1978 and is still one of the most reliable machines ever built, with expansion capabilities far beyond anything offered before, or since. The 4A's TMS9918 Video Display Processor included on-chip superimpose circuitry, and TI launched the Video Controller Card, which fits into one of the Expansion Box slots and lets you connect and control a laser disk player (chew on that CDTV). There is currently a hard disk controller for the 4A that will control three hard disks, four floppy disks (up to 1.44Mbs each) and a tape streamer. It will work alongside a standard floppy controller, which means that the 4A can have eight floppy disks on-line at once! Each hard disk can have up to 15 heads, and the controller will support 64K, YES 64K, per sector! The original 4A's video chip is connected by an interface only to the CPU, so it's possible to whip it out and replace it with an 80-column card. There are several 80-column cards which allow the use of V9938s and V9958s in place of the 9918. Both the 9938 and 9958 will support all of the old 9918 modes, but include 512 * 424 in 16 colours, and 256 * 424 in 256 colours. The 9958 has got an additional mode, called YJK display, which is TI's answer tc HAM mode, but gives a resolution of 512 * 424 in 19,268 colours.

The machine I am using at the moment is a Myarc GENEVE 9640 which is totally compatible with the 99/4A. It's running a 16MHz TMS9995 which makes it compatible with the TMS9900, but gives you about as much speed as a 386. In the future I am hoping to obtain a faster version of the 9995 which can be clocked at 25MHz and makes the 486 jealous. Having RISC and no stack really does make a difference!

The GENEVE's video chip is the V9938, which gives it mouse control, and hardware line drawing twice as fast as the Amiga! Both the 9938 and 9958 include on-chip Gen-lock, superimpose and digitise, and each chip will set you back around £18! Now, isn't that cost effective! The new range of Amigas are feeling the strain of serious processing ability and are including a TMS34020 Video Display Processor which is supporting four maths co-processors all by itself.

The reason my friend and I were reading CU Amiga is that we have recently taken a backward step, and have been forced into buying Amigas to allow the transfer of data to our real computers. I got a 600 and went through four Amigas in about a month as they all developed problems. I had to wait for over a week for a service engineer, and when he came he brought a board with a faulty keyboard decoder! I took the 600 back, got a refund, and purchased an A600 HD. After five minutes of use it glitches out. The first 600 I had would copy disks, but the copies would not run on the same machine, although they ran on my friend's 500+. That's what I call progress. My 99/4A still sits in my room, ready for action. It's never been repaired and has never gone wrong, despite ten years of faithful service. It's true when they say they don't make them like they used to! If only TI had bought the Amiga design instead of Commodre it might have had a decent filing system and a device independent operation system... etc., etc.

Richard Twyning, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire.

Very sad.








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highspeed pascal

READER REVIEW

In the first of our reader reviews, Colin Yarnall takes a look at HighSpeed Pascal and reckons this programming language lives up to its sporty name.

WHAT'S THIS? A READER REVIEW?

Starting from this issue, we'll be carrying a regular Reader Review slot where, coincidentally enough, our readers can wax lyrical or shake with rage over any product they care to review. If you've ever disagreed with one of our reviews or bought a product we've never even mentioned, then here's your chance to tell everyone about it. And the best part about it all is that we pay you for enlightening us. Each review we print earns the writer £50.

VERSATILE

The original Pascal language was designed by Professor Worth way back in 1971. It was put together to teach good programming habits and modular programming design rather than with sound and graphics in mind. HighSpeed Pascal brings the language bang up to date and introduces features more commonly found in Borland International's Turbo Pascal on the PC. Furthermore, it allows the programmer to access all of the Amiga's operating system routines in much the same way as any commercial Amiga C compiler. This means that you can make full use of the Amiga's hardware, or if you prefer, write programs that are portable between the Amiga, PC and Atari computers. To do the latter you would, of course, need a compiler for each machine.

THE PACKAGE

The package contains four disks and two manuals. Two of the disks are program disks, one being for WB1.3 users, the other for WB2.0 users. There are also two units disks, again one for each version of the operating system. The unit's disks contain software interfaces that allow the user to access the ROM Kernel routines.

All user programs will run under both versions of Workbench. However, it is recommended that the WB2.0 unit's disk is used regardless of the machine used for development. This is to make it simple for WB1.3 programmers to use WB2.0 features when they upgrade, or when they decide to start using them.

EDITING

The editor supplied with HighSpeed Pascal has all the features that you would expect of a good text editor. It is also integrated with the compiler. This means that you can compile and run your program without leaving the editing environment. When the compiler points out an error, or you spot one at run-time, changes can be made with a minimum of fuss since you are already in the editor.

The editor is simple to use and has some very nice features. One of these is the ability to use projects. Essentially, a project is a collection of the source files that make up a program. For example, the main program may be in one file, the graphics procedures in a second file and sound procedures in a third. Each of these may be loaded into the editor as a separate window under the same project. it is also possible to work on several projects at the same time.

Another useful feature of the editor is the ability to set up bookmarks. A bookmark is a way of labelling any point in the program text. Having set up a bookmark it is then possible to move quickly to that point from anywhere within a project.

COMPILATION

The compiler performs the task of translating Pascal programs into machine code exceedingly quickly, hence the prefix HighSpeed. By default, the compiler makes extensive use of RAM which further reduces compilation time. In fact, it is so fast that you'll hardly notice the process of compilation unless you are working on a large project.

To really test the compiler, I wrote a program that contained 2,500 lines of source code. Under normal circumstances the source code would be loaded into the editor and the compiler invoked from there. However, as the program was so long I had to invoke the compiler from the CLI to provide sufficient RAM for compilation. This meant that the program was first read from disk, compiled, then the resulting executable program written back to disk. The time taken for the compiler to do this job on a standard 1Mb A500 was just 22 seconds. Had the program been compiled on a machine with more RAM and from within the editor, the compilation time would have been very significantly shorter. While on the subject of memory, I should point out that HiSoft recommends at least 1.5 Mb of RAM when using the compiler with the WB2.0 unit's disk. However, if you are prepared to use the CLI it is possible to get away with using less.

As already mentioned, it is possible to invoke the compiler from the CLI or from within the editor. Both these environments allow the programmer to configure the compiler to perform such tasks as stack checking, IO error checking and range checking as well as many other options. From within the editor the options are chosen from the menu while the CLI options take the form of command arguments.

KILLING THE BUGS

The debugger included with the package is called MonAm which will be familiar to Devpac users. It is designed with the low level programmer in mind, rather than the Pascal programmer. High level programmers are not usually interested in debugging a disassembled version of their program. Unfortunately, this is what MonAm was designed to do. It was disappointing to find that HiSoft had ignored the needs of the Pascal programmer and considered that a modified version of the Devpac debugger would suffice.

CONCLUSION

HighSpeed Pascal is a quality product that is, on the whole, well thought out. The compiler lives up to its sporty name and is a dream come true for Amiga-owning Pascal programmers. Anyone familiar with either Pascal or the Amiga's operating system should not have too much trouble using HighSpeed Pascal.

It's worth mentioning that the manuals do not attempt to teach the Pascal language. They do, however, provide a brief summary and point novices in the direction of suitable texts. It is also worth noting that most Amiga programming books require a little knowledge of the C programming language. Therefore, it may be that HighSpeed Pascal will not achieve the success it deserves but it should prove popular with students and experienced programmers.

WE'LL SUPPORT YOU EVER MORE

Programming in any language can be a tricky business. If, after consulting the manuals, you are still stumped, help is not far away. The technical support provided by HiSoft is excellent and is available over the telephone or by return of post. For the first 30 days after registering with HiSoft this support is available for £19.95 and is worth every penny. Owners of other HiSoft products who have paid for Silver Support will receive the same service for HighSpeed Pascal free of charge.

HIGHSPEED at a glance

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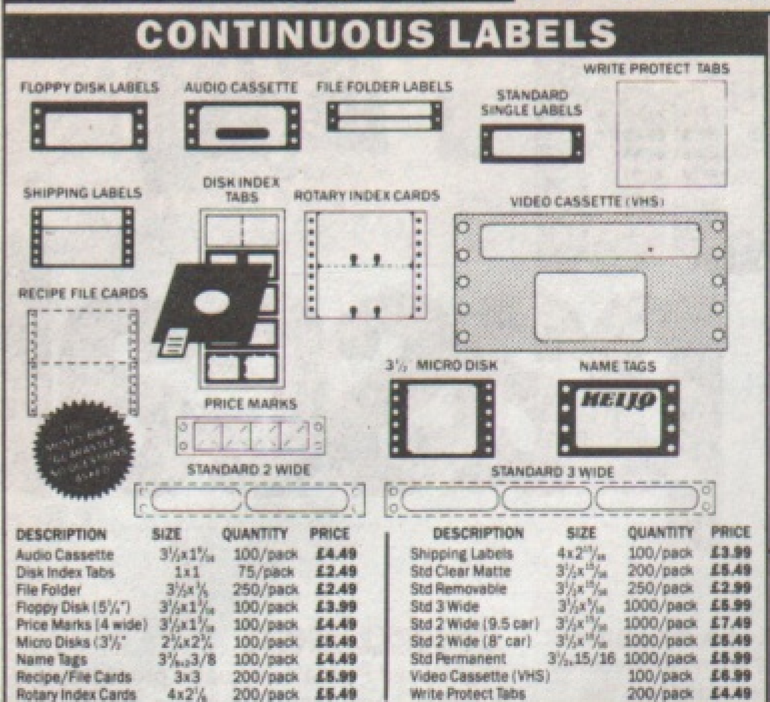
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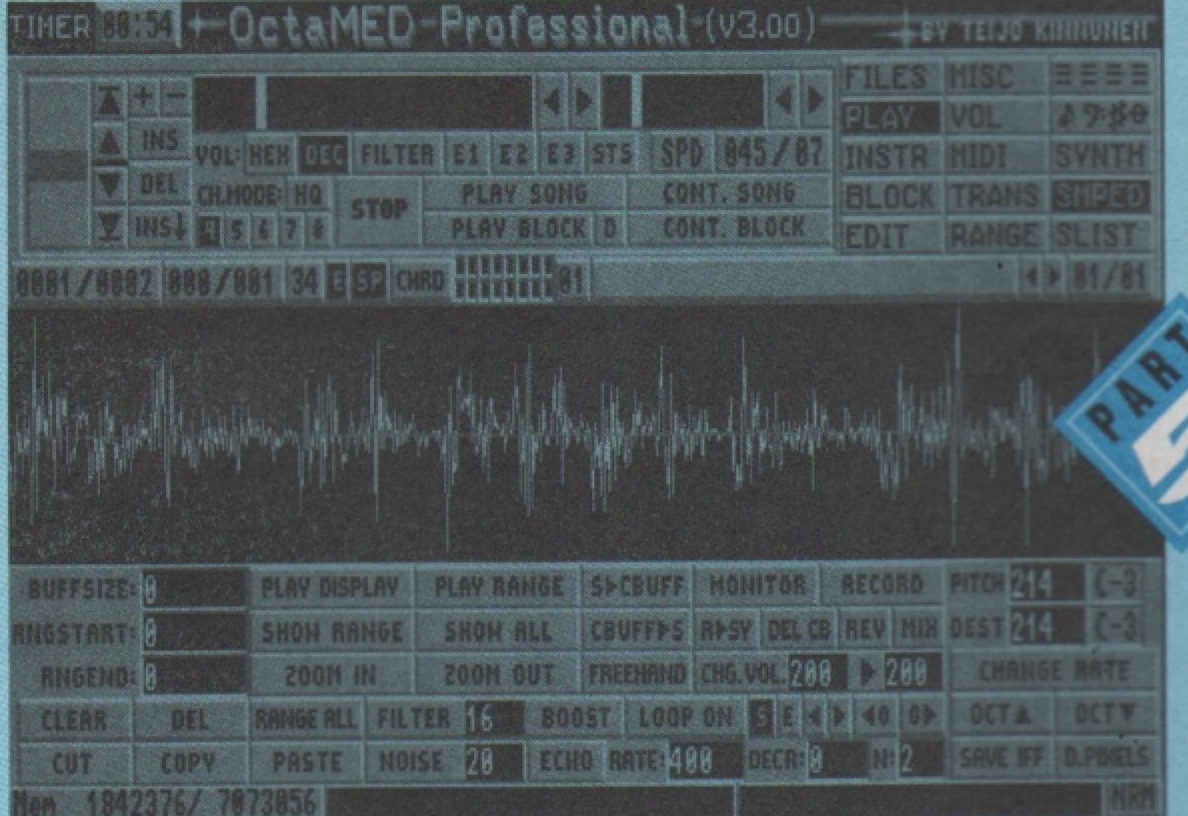
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SOUND CHECK

OCTAMED

In the final instalment of his extensive *OctaMed* tutorial Mat Broomfield looks at sampling and sample editing.



OctaMed features software support for sampler hardware, so you need never leave your favourite music package even when recording new instruments. The sophisticated sample editor also allows you to create some very advanced effects, and includes features not included in many commercial software packages.

PART 5

SIMPLE SAMPLING

Although most samplers are supplied with their own editing and recording software, nothing is more frustrating than being right in the middle of a song and finding that you have to spend ages loading additional software, just to record a one-second sample. Luckily, you don't have to go to all that bother because OctaMed includes a recording and editing section of its own, which you can see by clicking SMPED in the options palette.

To record a sample, you'll need to own a sampler that plugs into the parallel port, and of course, it should be plugged in BEFORE you switch your computer on.

SETTING UP

Let's jump straight in and record a sample. Switch on your sound source (a walkman, amplifier, CD player or Hi-Fi, for example), so that there is music playing into the sampler, then click the MONITOR button in the Sample Editing Options. Assuming you have your sampler connected properly, you should hear sound coming out of your speakers or TV/monitor, and the Waveform window (the large black one above the Sample Editing Options) should display a constantly changing waveform

If this doesn't happen, check that your hardware is correctly connected, and that there is sound coming from your source, e.g. CD player. If you still don't get any sound, it's possible that your sampler isn't compatible with *OctaMed*. Without changing the hardware setup, try your sampler with its own software just to check that the hardware is still functioning, if it is then I'm afraid you won't be able to record samples with *OctaMed*, although you can still edit them.

Assuming your sampler does produce a sound when you click the MONITOR button, look at the waveform that appears in the Waveform window. We're going to adjust the input level so that when you come to record a sample, it will be clear with no distortion or hissing (caused by the volume being too high or too low).

The waveform appears as a wildly changing white pattern of vertical zig-zags in the Waveform window. As you listen to the sound being played through your sampler, you should notice that loud parts of the music generate high peaks and low troughs, whilst quiet parts create smaller ones. When your sound source is playing something loud, set the volume or input level so that none of the white zig-zags actually touch the top or bottom of the black Waveform window. If they do, either turn down the volume on your sound source, or if your sampler has an adjustable input level dial or slider, decrease that until the waveform falls just short of the top and bottom borders of the window. Take care not to decrease the volume or level too far, or your sample will be unnecessarily quiet.

Your objective is to adjust the level so that the loudest parts of the music generate a waveform peak or trough that is only just short of the border. This will produce a sample with maximum volume and clarity. When you are happy with the input level of your sound, click MONITOR again to switch monitoring off.

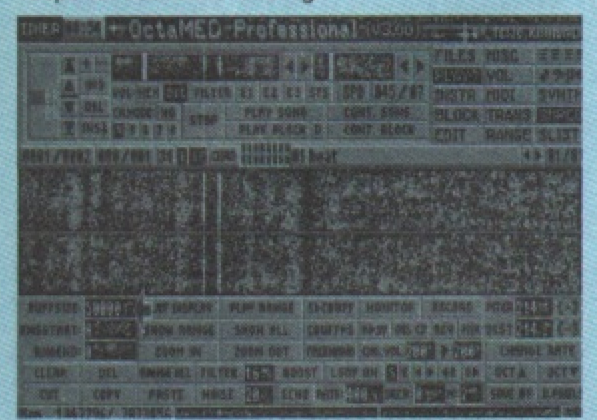
This is what happens if the input level is too high. The flat tops to the waves will cause serious distortion when the sample is played.

RECORDING A SAMPLE

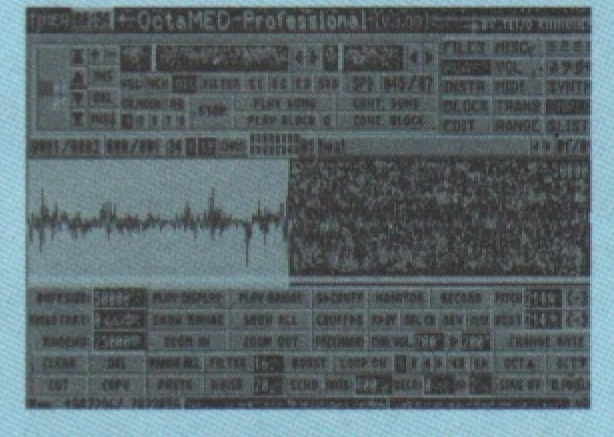
Before you can record a sample, you must tell *OctaMed* how much memory to allocate to it. You can do this by entering a number in the BUFFSIZE requester at the left-hand side of the Sample ➤

OCTAMED

Editing Options. The maximum memory that you can allocate to a single sample is 130000 bytes (130K). Although this may not be anywhere near the maximum RAM capacity of your Amiga, the *OctaMed* sampler is not designed for sampling entire songs or albums! It's designed so that the user can sample and edit individual instruments or loops for use within a song.



For now, type in 50000 and press Return. We've now set up a 50K buffer to record a sample into. Click the RECORD button and provided your music is still playing, you should see the dancing waveform appear as it did when we were monitoring the sound earlier. When you come to a bit of music that you wish to record, click the left mouse button and *OctaMed* will start sampling. The screen will be blanked out whilst this is taking place, but don't worry. After about five or six seconds, the screen display will return and your sample will be waiting in the Waveform window ready for you to save or edit as you require.



To test that your sample has been recorded properly, click PLAY DISPLAY and you should hear it being replayed.

SAVING THE SAMPLE

At the moment, our sample has no name, and it doesn't occupy one of *OctaMed's* instrument positions. This means that you will be unable to hear the results of certain changes that you may wish to make to it (looping, for example). To remedy this, we must save the sample, then load it back into one of the instrument positions, so let's move on to do that now.

The sample can be saved in two forms: 'Raw' (for use in packages such as *Protracker* and other *Soundtracker* clones), or 'IFF' for most other programs. At the bottom of the sample editing window there is a small button labelled SAVE IFF. If you want your sample to be saved in IFF format, this button should be highlighted.

Now go to the options palette at the top of the screen and click FILES to open the file requester. Using the devices list, or by typing a path name directly into the DIR requester, specify where you want to store the sample. Now enter the name you want to give it in the FILE requester, then click SAVEINSTR to save the sample.

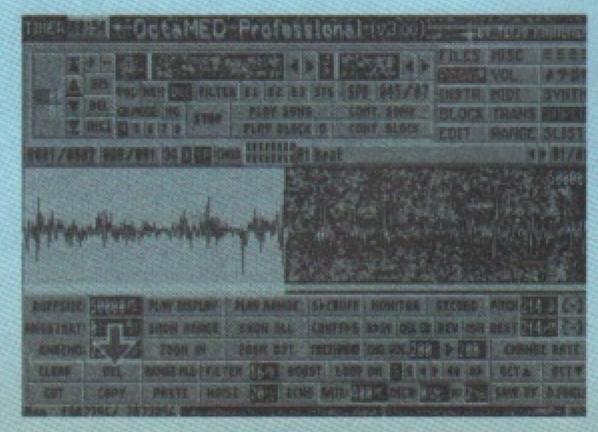
Once the sample has been saved to disk or RAM, it can be loaded into an instrument position. Because we've only just saved it, the instrument details will still be in the appropriate requesters so click LOAD INSTR and the sample will be loaded into instrument position 01, and you should see its name appear in the Major Status bar.

If you now press any of the note keys (most of the letters and numbers) on your Amiga keyboard, you should hear the sample being replayed. Obviously the pitch and speed at which it's replayed depends on the key that you press. Provided you haven't pressed any of the function keys (so that octaves 1 and 2 are still selected) pressing the letter 'Q' will replay the sample at its original pitch.

MIXMASTER

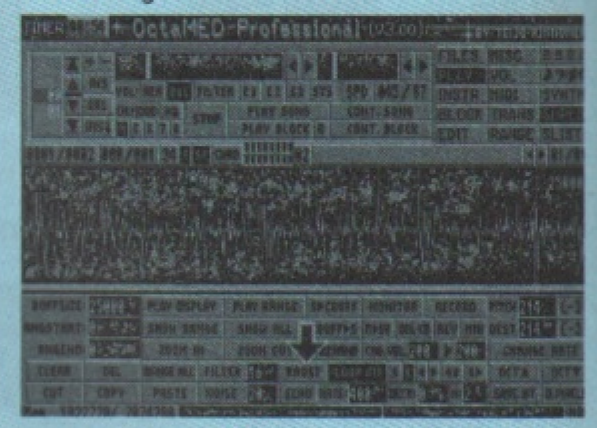
Returning to the sample editor, let's explore some more of its features. We'll start by mixing two samples together. Your original sample should be visible in the Waveform window. Click S>CBUFF to copy the sample into the Copy Buffer. Now we have two copies of the sample; one on the screen and another in the Copy Buffer (which we can recall if we need to).

Look at the left of the Sample Editing options and you'll see two related options: RNGSTART and RNGEND. These are used for defining a range within the sample. A range is a highlighted area upon which you can perform special operations without affecting the rest of the sample.



At the moment both range requesters contain the number 0, so let's change that now. Click in the black box beside the RNGEND requester and enter the number 25000, then press Return. We've just defined the end point of the range, and because the start point (RNGSTART) is 0, a range is created from 0 to 25000 bytes. If you recall, we specified a sample size of 50000 bytes earlier on, so you've probably already realised that the range covers half of the entire sample. The highlighted range is shown in inverse colours in the Waveform window. If you click PLAYRANGE, you'll notice that *OctaMed* only plays the highlighted portion of the sample.

Click DEL at the bottom of the Sample Editing Options to delete the highlighted range. Now click MIX to mix the contents of the Copy Buffer with the sample on the screen, then click PLAY DISPLAY to hear what you've created. In all probability it sounds pretty awful, but the principle should be clear enough!

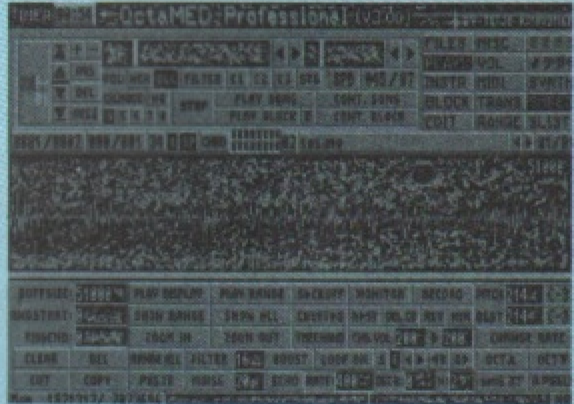


A side-effect of mixing two samples is that the overall volume of the sample is decreased. The easy solution to this is to use the BOOST option to 'pump up' the volume to its maximum level. To do this click on the RANGEALL button, then on the BOOST button. After a while, you'll see the overall height of the waveform increase until the highest peaks are just touching the borders of the Waveform window.

ECHO, ECHO, ECHO

Echoing can add a great deal of depth to a sample, and that's exactly what we're going to do now. We'll start by recalling our original sample, so click the button labelled CBUFF>S. When you click the button, the original sample should replace the existing one in the editing window, but you might like to play it just to confirm that this has happened...

Because we're going to add an echo to the entire sample, we'll need a bit of extra blank space at the end of it for the echo to go into. At the moment the BUFFSIZE should read 50000, which is what we set up when we recorded the sample. Change that number to 51000 and press Return. As you do so, a message appears at the top of the screen saying 'Press C to clear sample, R to retain it, or Esc to cancel'. Clearly, we want to retain the sample so press R and you should see a bit of blank space appear at the end of the sample.



Look at the bottom of the Sample Editing Options next to the ECHO option. There are three requesters labelled RATE, DECR and N. For now, we're simply going to change the RATE. This represents the distance in bytes from the original sound, to its echo. As we extended the sample by 1000 bytes, enter the number 1000 in the RATE requester (its default is 400) then click the ECHO button. The word 'Echoing...' will appear at the top of the screen followed by the number 2, which decreases to 1 before the echo is completed. This number relates to the number of echoes that are

added to the sample, and is equivalent to the number in the N requester.

Play the sample to hear the difference that the echo makes... Quite impressive eh? One thousand bytes represents quite a small echo offset, so had you wanted the effect to be more pronounced, you would have added more space at the end of the sample, and typed an appropriately larger number in the RATE requester. As a matter of interest, very low echo rates (1-400) can be used to create a sort of Dalek/electronic effect.

CHANGING VOLUME

Although you can change the volume of a sample in *OctaMed's* Track Editor, this is quite imprecise compared to the volume changes that can be added in the Sample Editor. To see what I mean, reload your original sample (either from disk or from the Copy Buffer) and select it all using the RANGEALL button. Beside the CHG.VOL button, there are two requesters both of which contain the number 200 at the moment. These represent the start and end volume of the sample expressed as a percentage. Therefore if you clicked the CHG.VOL button right now, the entire sample's volume would be doubled (increased to 200% of its former level). We're going to use this feature to perform a fade-out on our sample, so change the first number to 100 and the second one to 1, then click CHG.VOL.

You'll see that the average height of the waveform gradually decreases to nothing moving from left to right across the sample. We've just performed a quick and easy fade-out. Of course, it's just as easy to perform a fade-in; just swap the numbers 1 and 100 over in the volume requesters.

LOOP-DE-LOOP

Let's finish by looking at one of the most powerful and useful features of the Sample Editor – looping.

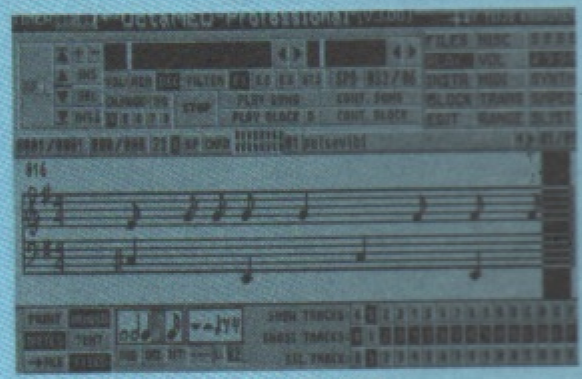
Reload your original sample and click the LOOP ON button. Two Purple bars should appear at the extreme ends of the Waveform window. These are the loop markers and they're used to specify the start and end points of any loops you want to set up.

When a loop is defined, and the sample is played, it will play normally until the second loop marker is encountered. At this point OctaMed will jump back to the first loop marker and start playing from that position. From then on, the loop part of the sample will be continuously played until you decide to stop it.

Looking at the Sample Editing options you'll see that the letter S next to the LOOP ON option is currently highlighted. This means that the Start Loop Marker is currently active, and any loop adjustments that you make will affect that marker. If you want to adjust the End Marker, select the letter E instead.

The markers can be moved in one of four ways. By moving the cursor into the Waveform window and clicking the left mouse button, the selected marker will immediately jump to current cursor position. If you keep the left button pressed down and move the mouse left or right, you can drag the marker along the waveform. Beside the letters S and E, there are two sets of arrows. The plain ones are used to move the markers by two bytes at a time for making ultra-fine adjustments. Unless the waveform is highly magnified, you're unlikely to see the loop markers moving when you use these arrows. The other set of arrows (with the 0s in them) are used to move the markers to points in the sample that have a value of 0. This can be particularly useful when trying to create a smooth loop point.

Using the start and end markers, try defining a loop somewhere in the middle of your sample. You won't hear the effect of the loop by clicking PLAY DISPLAY or PLAYRANGE, you have to play the sample by pressing one of the computer keys.



Can anyone produce something like this?

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OCTAMED HISTORY

OctaMED has a long development history stretching back to 1989, when Teijo Kinnunen, the program's author, decided to write his own *Soundtracker* program. At the time he was using the *DOC Soundtracker IV*, and although he found it easy enough to use, he was dissatisfied by its inability to operate under Kickstart 1.3 or multi-task.Teijo created version 1.0 and named it *MED*, an acronym for Music EDitor. In his own words it was 'Not released... V1.0 looks quite pitiful'. When he released version 1.2 into the public domain, it was placed in the Fred Fish library, thus beginning a worldwide flood of enthusiasm for the program.

Teijo continued his steady development of the program, and it gradually achieved classic status with musicians. However, despite the fact that some people were sending in their shareware contributions, most people were not. Amiganuts United, a UK PD company, signed a licenceware agreement with Teijo, which ensured that he received some recompense for all his hard work. From version 2.11b onwards, users had to pay for the program *before* they could use it. Amiganuts received a flood of criticism and abuse from certain PD companies about taking the program out of the public domain. This abuse became so serious that they were forced to change their phone number and bring the police in. Ironically those same abusive PD companies are now distributing their own shareware.

By the time Teijo had reached version 3.00, he produced a major re-write which supported up to eight internal samples simultaneously. This gave rise to a dedicated eight track version called *OctaMED*. Also, at this time Amiganuts published a specially commissioned manual for *OctaMED*, thus making the program even easier to use.

As soon as CU heard that Teijo was working on *OctaMED Professional*, we decided to do everything we could to get the program so that you could see what all the fuss was about. After successfully outbidding rival magazines, CU proudly brought you the program on our July coverdisk. This version represents many improvements, and brings the program into the reach of professional users with the addition of numerous MIDI features. We hear that version 4.00 is now underway, and of course we'll be bringing you details as soon as they're announced.



Spice up your rhythm section with a little cheese grater solo – but watch those fingernails...ouch!

Tired of using other people's samples? Tony Horgan shows how to inject some individuality into your soundtracks.

ORIGINAL SAMPLES

I'm sure when the great inventor Sir Edward G. Sampler created his namesake, he must have had all kinds of different ideas for its use. I shouldn't think he envisaged it being used by the world and his wife for the same old James Brown samples time and again. So what else are you supposed to sample if you've had enough of using other people's sounds? How about some of your own?

Shock horror! Not...'original samples'? Surely a contradiction in terms? Well, with a microphone in one hand, and a mouse in the other, the wacky world of original samples is right under your nose (or over your shoulder, or wherever you happen to point the mike).

THE KIT

Let's begin with a rundown of the expensive hardware you'll need: a microphone, or a tape recorder with built-in microphone. Hardly going to break the bank is it? Just about any mike will do. Your best bet is to get down to Tandy and pick up one of the cheapest you can find. As for the tape recorder, your home hi-fi may well have a built-in mike, in which case there's no need for any outlay at all.

LIVE OR RECORDED?

If you decide to use a separate microphone, you have the choice of sampling straight into the computer, or first recording sounds to tape, via the tape deck's input socket. The advantage of connecting your mike directly to the sampler, is that you get a 'first generation' recording. Recording to tape, then sampling from that, introduces another stage, during which your sound will inevitably become slightly degraded by background tape noise.

On the other hand, you can hardly take your Amiga into a forest to sample the birds singing. In this case, you might find a portable tape recorder just a bit more convenient. Another advantage of putting sounds onto tape first is that you can sample one-off sounds, over which you have little or no control, such as your dog barking, a plane flying overhead and so on. Once you've got something down on tape, you can mess around setting up your sampler for as many takes as you like. By the way, if you're using a handheld mike, you'll need to amplify it unless your sampler has a line/mike control on it. This is easily done if your hi-fi has an input marked MIC. Connect your sampler to the hi-fi's headphone socket, and away you go.

WHAT'S COOKING?

The kitchen is a very good place to start your DIY sampling. No, it's nothing to do with a warm humid atmosphere, or the inspiring smell of last night's curry remains. What we're interested in are good old fashioned kitchen utensils.

Suddenly the cheese grater becomes a skiffle board. I wouldn't advise playing it with bare hands, unless you like the sound of grated fingernails (then again, realistic screams can come in handy for those spookier tunes...). Run a knife along its variously punctured surfaces, and you've got a handful of alternative percussion samples. Grab a saucepan, give it a whack with a wooden spoon, a tea spoon and fork, and you've got three very individual cowbells. Use a bit of imagination, and you can come up with a whole culinary drum kit. Stuck for a bass drum? Step outside and give the dustbin some grief. For some tuned percussion or instrument sounds, try milk bottles, glasses and beer cans, hit with various pieces of cutlery.

There's no need to stop there either. Just about any two metallic utensils offer useful sounds when banged or rubbed together. As for sound effects, apart from the crashes and bangs created by baking trays falling to the floor, you can mock-up raging infernos by recording the chip pan in full flow, or simulate Niagara Falls by running the taps into the sink. Play your tap water samples at a slow speed to get that big sound.

rself sampling

TALKING LOUD AND CLEAR

Unless you can sing, or do a good line in 'Can you feel it?'-style MC impersonations, you've probably never considered sampling your own voice. That's most likely a good thing, but it is worth checking out some of the voice-changing features of most sampling software. A bit of reverb or echo isn't going to make much difference, but a realtime pitch-changer or 'robotiser' effect could transform you into Darth Vader.

As far as I know, there isn't yet a package that can sample and affect the incoming sound at once, so for now you'll have to record your processed speech to tape, and sample it from there. There are some voices however, such as mine for one, that even the best Amiga sampler can do nothing for. This can be quite a problem, when your voice still sounds as monotone and boring as ever, but you can't find a sample that says what you want.

There is still an option left open, but it won't always be appropriate. Remember showing your mates how your computer could talk? Well, why not let your Amiga be your voice? OK, it's not the best speech synthesiser around by a long shot, but at least it won't mar your music with a grating Liverpudlian/ Mancunian/Cockney drone. Yes, I know you can drone just as well in other parts of the world, so no letters please.

If you've heard enough of the Amiga's speech synth to last you a lifetime, how about digging out that old Speak and Spell, or even sampling one of those talking dolls? Reversing vocals is an easy way of creating new sounds. For something a little more out of the ordinary, rather than simply reversing the whole phrase, try flipping each syllable separately. Vocals are also a good source for homemade synth sounds. Let's say you had the word 'love' sitting in your sampler. By looping the 'o' and cutting off the end, you've just added a brand new instrument sound to your collection. For an example of this technique, cock an ear at the recent hit from Was Not Was, 'Shake Your Head', in which the word 'head' is used to play back that catchy little riff throughout the song.

REAL LIFE

Sounds from the real world can do wonders for a track's atmosphere. Probably the most often used sound effect is that of the thunderstorm. Recording your own thunder claps could be a bit of an ordeal, but rain shouldn't pose too much of a problem. For your more racey tunes, how about sampling a few car engines? A bit of pitchbend can do wonders for the mosquito-like drone of a Reliant Robin! If you live near an airport, try grabbing some aeroplane sounds. Those with more rural surroundings could take their tape recorder down to the farm. Pigs, sheep, cows and dogs are transformed into scarey monsters when their honks and tweets are played back at half the original rate.

DIY INSTRUMENTS

There are a few ways of creating new instrument sounds. *MED* includes a synthesiser section, but it's far from user-friendly. Alternatively you could use one of the sample-synthesis programs (such as the PD utility *Sample Maker*) to come up with new sounds.

Even if you don't fancy either of these options, you can still have a crack at making some original instrument sounds with no more than your sampler. Maybe you've got a few bass samples that you like, but none of them is quite what you're after. Possibly one has a nice biting attack to it, but no beef, and another is good and bassy, but has little character. Combining the strengths of both into one sample is an easy job. First make sure that both samples play the same note. If not, tune one of them to match the other. Now load up your first sample, and copy the attack into the buffer. Next, load up the second sample, and mix the attack you just copied over the start of the current sample. By repeatedly using the mix function, you'll get more and more of the attack superimposed on the second sound.

Combining bells with pianos, choirs and strings gives your samples a bright top end, and makes them even more effective as lead sounds. Variations of this technique can be used to customise your drum sounds. As well as layering snare sounds, it's also useful to combine a few snares with bass drums. That way, when you're sequencing, you're not faced with the dilemma of dropping the bass drum when the snare comes in, or using an extra track.

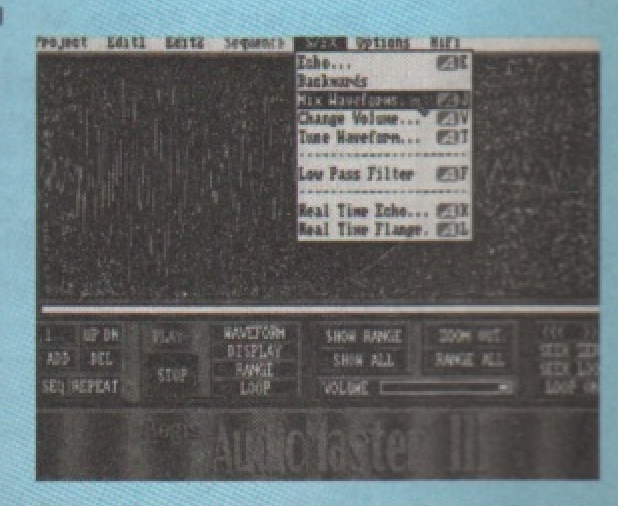
Getting back to the subject of basses, you can get some excellent sine wave basses by sampling feedback. Different set-ups give different results, and you may end up with whistles rather than hums, but I found my 4-track creates an excellent sub-bass sine wave if you route the output to the input. Beware though, feedback can be dangerous if it gets out of hand – you have been warned!

EXPERIMENT

Experimentation is the key. Subject your sounds to phaser effects, delays and reversals, and the variations are endless. Even if you come up with a totally off-the-wall sound, it's worth saving it out to disk. Once you load it into a tracker or sequencer, and start to play back a few tunes, you'll be surprised at how useful some of your mutated samples can be. That's all for this month. Happy sampling!



Composing the new BBC Grand Prix theme? Try sampling that rust-bucket of a car you've got sitting outside – the noisier the better!



Stack up a few instrument samples on top of one another (making sure they're all tuned to the same note), and create beefier basses, richer strings and epic lead sounds.

SELL OUT

The Ultimate Hints 'n' Tips Guide

Be the best and beat the rest. The most comprehensive playing Guide for Amiga games produced to date. Over 1000 individual tips on every type of game. Over 90 pages. You can't play seriously without it. All this for only £5 inc. P+P. Please send cheque or P.O to: 13 Street Lane, Bewerley, Pateley Bridge, Harrogate, North Yorks HG3 5HW. Includes free copy of new disk magazine. What more could Amiga gamesplayers want?!

Shieldsoft PD (Amiga) All disks 50p to 80p inclusive. Catalogue disk free. S.A.E 13 Churton Road, Rhyl, Clwyd LU8 3MB or telephone 0745 343044.

Over 450 games cheated, tipped and sent by return post! Simply send name and address, with £3.50 to: Mark Smith, 60 Foxfield Road, Westgate, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 4SS.

Amiga Contacts wanted send lists and disks to: Paul, 2 Friar Grove, Heath Grove, Buxton, SK17 9EN. 100% reply.

Chic: The best Amiga user group.Contacts/PD/ secondhand goods & much more. S.A.E for details - Chic (CU) Box 121 Gerrards Cross, Bucks SL9 9JP. 0753 884473.

Amiga Contacts wanted all over the world. Send lists to: K. Liukkonen, Fjallgimmen 1, S-42449 Angered, Sweden. 100% reply guaranteed.

Amiga contacts wanted to swap games send lists to: Angelo, 44 Ambleside Gardens, Gunthorpe, Peterborough, Cambs PE4 62Y or Tel: 0733 325011.

Amiga A500 games for sale at bargain prices. Old and new games. For a list of the games and prices send a S.A.E to: 27 Llys Nercwys, Mold, Clwyd, North Wales, CM7 1HR.

Wanted: to buy PD library. All letters answered. Details to: R. Winstone, 63 Downman Road, Lockleaze, Bristol BS7 9TY.

Horror slideshow. Exorcist, Cannibal Ferox, Cannibal Holocaust, Aliens - special edition, Evil Dead 1 & 2, Thing, Alien - Widescreen, Texas Chainsaw Massacre. All titles 2 disks, 2 drive. Amiga+ compatible. £3.00 each + 60p P&P. K. Howell, 54 Collin Road, Brislington, Bristol. BS4 3SD.

Colour Printer unused £99; "Battlehawks 1942" (Dogfights, Dive-Bombing: Medals promotion) £15; "Populous 1 + 2 " £15. (Best ever Amiga games?) 0885 410231.

For sale. Commodore Amiga games for sale! Over 30 games including many classics. Some still packaged unused. 211 originals including Elite, Champions of Krynn (RPG), Wheels of Fire (Racing compilation) and many more. Phone Gary after 6pm for lists + prices (London area) Tel: 081 550 8458.

Amiga software for sale. Games £1.50 per disk. To obtain lists and info write to: Jake Cannon PO Box 214, Ilford, Essex IG3 8RT London.

Amiga PD software (plus and A600 compatible) send stamp for catalogue. PFPD 41 Marion Street, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 4NA.

Amiga contacts wanted please send lists on disks to: Johan Jonkers, Raysstr. 108, 5921VS, Venlo, Holland. 100% reply guaranteed.

Amiga Pen Pal Club, for information and enrolment form send a S.A.E to: J.P.S 81 Dunedin Way, Hayes, Middx UB4 9LQ.

Cheats solutions over 500 latest solutions, Hook etc. All on 2 disks only £4. Send S.A.E To: G.Smith 85 Byron Crescent, Northfield Aberdeen.

Amiga software sale. All of my collection must go, for list-disk send S.A.E to: 5 London Road, Long Sutton, Lincs PE12 9EA.

Amiga contacts wanted to swap games. Send lists or disks to: Rizwan, 253 Manley Road, Chorlton, Manchester, M21 1RE, 101% reply.

READ THIS! Amiga contacts wanted fast! Send your list and disk to: Starquake +CCP 2 Bessfield Park, Carrickfergus, N Ireland BT38 7BY 101% reply guaranteed.

A500/+/A600 AMIGA from 35p, Amiga accessories, unique offers - something for everyone! For free details and disk catalogue, whip two stamps off to, Redlaw Resources PD, 74 Durban Road, Patchway, Bristol BS12 5HQ. Overseas customers welcome! Send two blank disks.

GCSE programmes for Amiga. Send 2 first class stamps for details. G. Symonds, Greenroofs, Thrope RD, Haddiscoe, Norwich. NR14 6PP.

Artman PD, all the latest and greatest, 85p per disk inclusive. Blank disk & S.A.E for catalogue and two free games. 40 Northwell Gate Otley West Yorkshire LS21 2DN.

Public Domain from 50p - 85p 1000's of titles. For free catalogue and game send S.A.E to: M. Darby 7 Ash Grove, Shirebrook Mansfield MG20 8QA.

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NEXT MONTH

CHANGES...PART 3

It must be something in the water! No sooner have we added an extra 32-page supplement to the magazine, but we've got itchy feet again. I don't know, we just can't sit still for more than five minutes without sticking our nose into something. Starting next month, we're going to completely revamp our Blues Pages. For starters, they're going to be renamed 'Amiga Workshop' and will be chocabloc with tutorials, reader reviews, buyer's guides and step-by-step features – anything, in fact, that helps you get the most out of your Amiga. Inside Information and Helpline will be moving to a new home earlier on in the mag, and various columns and guides will be taking their place. What else? You'll just have to wait and see!

'TIS THE SEASON

The CU offices will be full of Christmas cheer (beer, more like) and there'll be lots of silly features, end of year round-ups and other such tomfoolery on offer next month. Plus we've got the results of our Fat Agnus Awards. We've had literally thousands of entries for the inagural presentation of these prestigious awards, and next month we'll tell you who the winners and losers are. And, as a special treat, we're going to do a special Year in the Life of CU Amiga, dragging up a few skeletons from certain people's closets and generally having a bit of a laugh.

IN THE BIN

Join us on the grabage heap of software as we review the games that have ended up in the editor's bin over the last few months. Let's face it – for every quality release that we review in CU Amiga, there are at least five which quietly get swept under the carpet. Which games will receive the dubious accolade of appearing in this brand new feature? You'll have to buy next month's magazine to find out.

PRINTER SPECIAL

If you've ever bought a printer, you'll know how frustrating it can be getting decent results out of the blessed thing. Following up this month's Q&A printer special we've commissioned a special feature on how to optimise the quality of your printer's output by using some of the special programs created to help you get better results.

ART GALLERY SPECIAL

We've been deluged with entries for this popular section of the magazine and most have been of an incredibly high standard. In a specially extended Art Gallery, we'll be showing off some of the best submissions we've received over the last couple of months. If you want to improve your drawing technique, or merely want to oggle at some of the amazing pictures we've received, then pull up a chair and pick up some hints and tips.

VIDEO SPECIAL

Let's face it, everyone can lay their hands on a video camera these days. So why not borrow Auntie Lucy's pride and joy for a day or two and use your Amiga to spruce up the family wedding, birthday party, christening, holiday or embarrasing school play?! Find out how in our in-depth tutorial.

OPAL VISION REVIEW

Probably the most talked about 24-bit graphics system since the Harlequin, we will be taking apart Centaur's newest piece of kit to give you the definitive low-down. Is Opalvision really any better than the mediocre pseudo-cards that have been appearing here in the last year? Will it be worth the (probably) phenominal asking price? Only your newsagent knows for sure, so make sure you reserve your copy today!

We will also be exploring the world of 24-bit graphics in general and analysing how the advent of the latest A4000 with 24-bit capability will permanently change the face of Amiga software.

MORPH WARS

Imagemaster (reviewed last issue) may not be king of the hill for long, as the next few weeks will see the release of image effects software from Impulse, Mirage and ASDG. All these packages will be evaluated to the usual stringent CU standards so at the end of the day you'll be left in no doubt as to which is the package for you.

THE DEATH OF THE NEXT MONTH PAGE

Why do we bother? Is there any point? You know as well as we do that almost everything on this page will be cancelled at the last minute and you'll be served up any old reviews in their place. It's got to stop, I tell you, and it will. This could very well be the last Last Month page you'll ever read in CU Amiga.



GAMING SPECIAL

Our special 32-page supplement concentrates on Amiga games for our special Christmas edition and gives an extended CU AMIGA guide to which games offer oustanding value for money. There'll also be a whole host of tips, features and other such titbits included in our tribute to the best games machine ever! Don't expect one of those boring top-100 guides that seem to be all the rage – instead, we'll be taking a look at all the different gaming genres that exist and nominating our top games from each one.



2 BRILLIANT WHITE-HOT COVER DISKS

We aim to please and our December coverdisks will be something a bit special! To give you something to play over the Festive season we've lined up 3 playable demos of the hottest games around. That alone is sure to be something special, but we've also got a red-hot productivity deal in the offing. Once again, the only way to find out is to wait until next month's issue hits the streets.

Contents may be subject to change without notice.

CU AMIGA – DECEMBER ISSUE ON SALE 26TH NOVEMBER



Nick Veitch, CU's Technical Editor resting on the only piece of human technology he really trusts. Or did trust that is, because last month it was stolen from outside the office. So if anyone offers you a nearly-new GPz550 A4 you know who to call...

Are we getting just a little bit too demanding when it comes to hardware? Nick Veitch explores a future where computers have nothing left to prove.

bigger, better, faster.

A4000 DEBUT

So, the A4000 has been released at last. The new spec. features an '040 processor significantly faster than any Amiga before, even faster than many of the accelerator upgrades available from third party manufacturers. The graphics have been dramatically enhanced by the new custom chips (with yet another bevy of girls' names to remember) and resolutions of stunning proportions are possible with a palette of 16.8 million colours to choose from.

It's not surprising then that people are already complaining. Why? Well, because the A4000 still only has four channels of 8-bit sound. Well, that's clearly not state of the art is it? It's nowhere near CD quality. Everyone will easily be able to notice the difference between 8-bit and 16-bit, won't they? Why do people want CD quality sound? Well, obviously music professionals will be quite interested in being able to use the Amiga as a hi-quality source, maybe for processing sounds or using the machine as a real-time effects unit. That's a specialist use though, the kind of thing that people expect to have to buy extra hardware to do, not a standard feature of a machine – not even on a top-end Macintosh or PC. So why else would they want it?

BETTER GAMES

Ah yes, the hordes of boggle-eyed leisure junkies raise their voices in protest? Games would be much better, wouldn't they? Okay, the A4000 is not a games machine (not at that price) but everyone knows that these developments gradually filter down the line – the new chipsets will be used in all new Amigas, so no 16-bit on the 4000 means no 16-bit on the 800 either (or whatever they call the next one). The gamers think they are being hard done by. For example, *Sensible Soccer* would be twice as good if the referee blew his whistle in 16-bit stereo, wouldn't it? *Streetfighter 2* would be so much better if those grunts were rendered in CD quality sound? No. At least, not that much better.

There is only so far you can go with some things. With graphics there is no point in having a palette of more than 16.8 million colours, for the simple reason that the human eye is limited to the number of shades and hues it can distinguish between. A picture using 16.8 million colours is going to look exactly the same as one using 4300 million. The physical resolution, the image area, can only be enhanced to certain limits before the resolution of the retina is exceeded (which at the moment is not a problem with the technology, only a problem of technology at a cost).

And what will we do then? Sound has already reached its boundary with 16-bit samples at sampling rates in excess of 44KHz. The human ear can't cope with anything better and in fact, very few people would be able to tell the difference between 12-bit and 16-bit sound. There is nowhere to go in that direction at all, except add more channels – but you only have two ears anyway.

In many ways the demands a game makes on a computer are far in excess of those required by normal business use. A spreadsheet has no use of eight-direction scrolling at 25 frames a second. A wordprocessor has no use of 16-channel sound. The fact that the Amiga is any good at 'serious' applications is testament to this fact – it was originally designed purely as a games machine. So, it seems the people who are driving us ever upward (or at least commercially supporting such developments) are games players.

SO WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE THEN?

Everybody knows that technology has no upper limit. Already chip manufacturers are exceeding the absolute limits they set themselves less than a decade ago. Semiconductor windows can be cut in terms of a few microns now, instead of a few hundred and the pace of advance drives us relentlessly into smaller and more powerful machines. Technology seems to reach on into infinity, but will there come a point when it can no longer do anything useful for us? Once sight and sound are solved the only traditional direction left to go for the hardware manufacturers is in making machines faster – but faster for what? Apart from business use where processing a 200,000 item database might be made a slightly less time consuming task, the average home user soon won't notice the difference. The limitations are not in our stars or in our hardware, but in ourselves.

What will we develop next? Will new fields of technology be opened to develop a digital way of storing smells? Or will we artificially enhance our ability to perceive the universe by extending our audio-visual capabilities? Will hardware companies and the pressures of consumerism force us to have SCART sockets fitted to our heads, just so we can experience *Oh No, Still More Lemmings Volume XXI* in a Better than Reality™ environment? A whole planetfull of hardware manufacturers are going to have to come up with something new or face bankruptcy.

The worrying thing is that this 'experience horizon' is approaching rather rapidly. A little over a decade ago we were lucky to have 197x256 mono resolution and no sound capabilities at all on a home computer. Now we whinge because we don't have CD quality over two stereo channels. Project that curve a few years into the future and the results are scary. No longer do we need to rely on science fiction for tacky plots about machines out-evolving us.

There may be no limits to the bounds of technology, but it's time everyone realised there are limits to the fields of the human experience. It may seem like a long way to go yet, but sooner or later we may find that we've amused ourselves to death.



MEGAMIX MASTER

SOUND SAMPLER

Real Time Digital Effects

OVERVIEW

MEGAMIX master is a high specification, low cost digital effects cartridge that plugs into your printer port. Special stereo effects such as echo can be added in real time.
You will find **Megamix Master's** performance and ease of use unmatched by any rival. Just plug it in and go...

Some of the Features include:

*Thru port for printer or digitiser.
*Fully multi-tasking.
*Intigrated 3.5mm jack plug and lead.
*3D Animated icons.
*Compatible with Workbench 2.0.
*Both Mono and Stereo sampling.

Real Time Digital Effects include:

ECHO-Adds echo to incoming sound.
PHASER-Applies space age phase shift.
SYNTH-Adds user definable effects.
DIRECT-Plays incoming sound direct.
VIBRATO-Rapidly varies frequency.
STEREO ECHO-Adds digital delay between L & R speakers.

Other Menu's include:

REMIX (with many sampling features).
EDIT (for sample manipulation).
DISK (for saving and loading etc).

Workbench 2.00 Compatible.

£39.95 Inc.

JUST LOOK AT THE SPEC.

American Software (U.S.A.)	(217) 384 2050
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Centresoft (U.K.)	(44) 021 6253388
Darius Soft (Austria)	(43) 123 4555
Gem Distribution (U.K.)	(44) 0279 442842
Goldhill Associates (Export)	(44) 081 9062009
H.B. Marketing (U.K.)	(44) 0753 686000

VIDI AMIGA 12

IMAGE CAPTURE

4096 Colour Images

OVERVIEW

Vidi-Amiga 12 is the ultimate low cost colour digitiser for Amiga. There are no filters and no separate RGB splitter. Colour images can be captured in less than a second, mono images are grabbed in real time. Fully compatible with any video source.

Some of the features include:

*Multi-tasking software.
*Advanced error diffusion stippling.
*Cut and Paste with masking.
*Capture into a user definable window.
*Load and save IFF ILBM and ANIM files.
*Grab frames flipped on a X or Y axis.
*Multi frame store with animated playback.
*Composite or S-Video input.

Display in the following resolutions:

PAL	NTSC
320 x 256	320 x 200
320 x 512	320 x 400
640 x 256	640 x 200
640 x 512	640 x 400

Supports several screen modes:

- 4096 HAM mode.
- 64 EHB mode.
- 32 colours.
- 16 colours.
- 16/8/4/2 shade mono.
- 262000 HAM-E mode.
- 256 colour EREG mode.
- Overscan/Interlace/Hi-Res.

Image Processing and Enhancement:

Sharpen/Smooth/Negative/Quantise
Thresholding/Solarization/Mosaic
Edge Detection/Brush selected area.

Workbench 2.00 Compatible.

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TAKE 2

ANIMATION

Professional Animation with Optional Image Capture

OVERVIEW

Take 2, as used in *"Rolfs Cartoon Club"* is the ultimate multi-level animation package. Offering up to 4 levels of animation and 4 levels of sound. Images are drawn within your favourite art package then loaded into Take 2 as IFF files. If you own Vidi-Amiga you can digitise your drawings from within Take 2. We believe its much easier to draw with a pencil than with a mouse.

Some of the features include:

- Compatibility with all Amigas.
- Supports 2, 4, 8, 16 and HAM colour.
- Loads or saves IFF or ANIM files.
- Traditional animators dope sheet.
- Play back up to 25 frames per second.
- Dubbing or simulated onion skin.

and lots more !!!

Applications:

- Traditional animation.
- Storyboards.
- Product presentation.
- Line tester.
- Stop frame animation.
- Cartoon productions.
- Education.
- 3D object animation.
- Video production.

Workbench 2.00 Compatible.

£49.95 Inc.

AS SEEN ON TV

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Micropace (U.K.)	(44) 0753 55188
Precision Distribution (U.K.)	(44) 081 5433500
Scibis Sprl (Belgium)	(32) 2245 8307
S.D.L. (U.K.)	(44) 081 3095000
Soundware SRL (Italy)	(39) 3322 32670
V.C.S. (Holland)	(31) 1045 11537



COOL WORLD

CARTOON LAND GONE BAD!

Whilst publishing his underground comic Jack Deebs has unwittingly created a parallel universe inhabited by cartoon characters known as **DOODLES**. *You are transported into* **COOL WORLD** *and seduced, through engaging messages, by the Doodle vamp...* **HOLLI**. *Visual jokes and gags punctuate your adventure as you hop to and fro between reality and* **COOL WORLD.** *But Holli's dream is to shed her Doodle indentity... to become a real woman - with a real interest in Jack!*

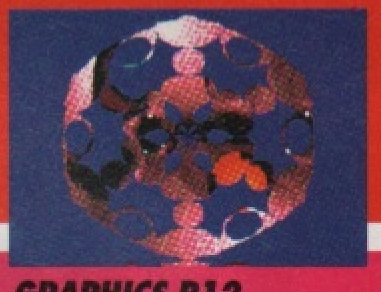
A DREAM THAT COULD DESTROY BOTH WORLDS!



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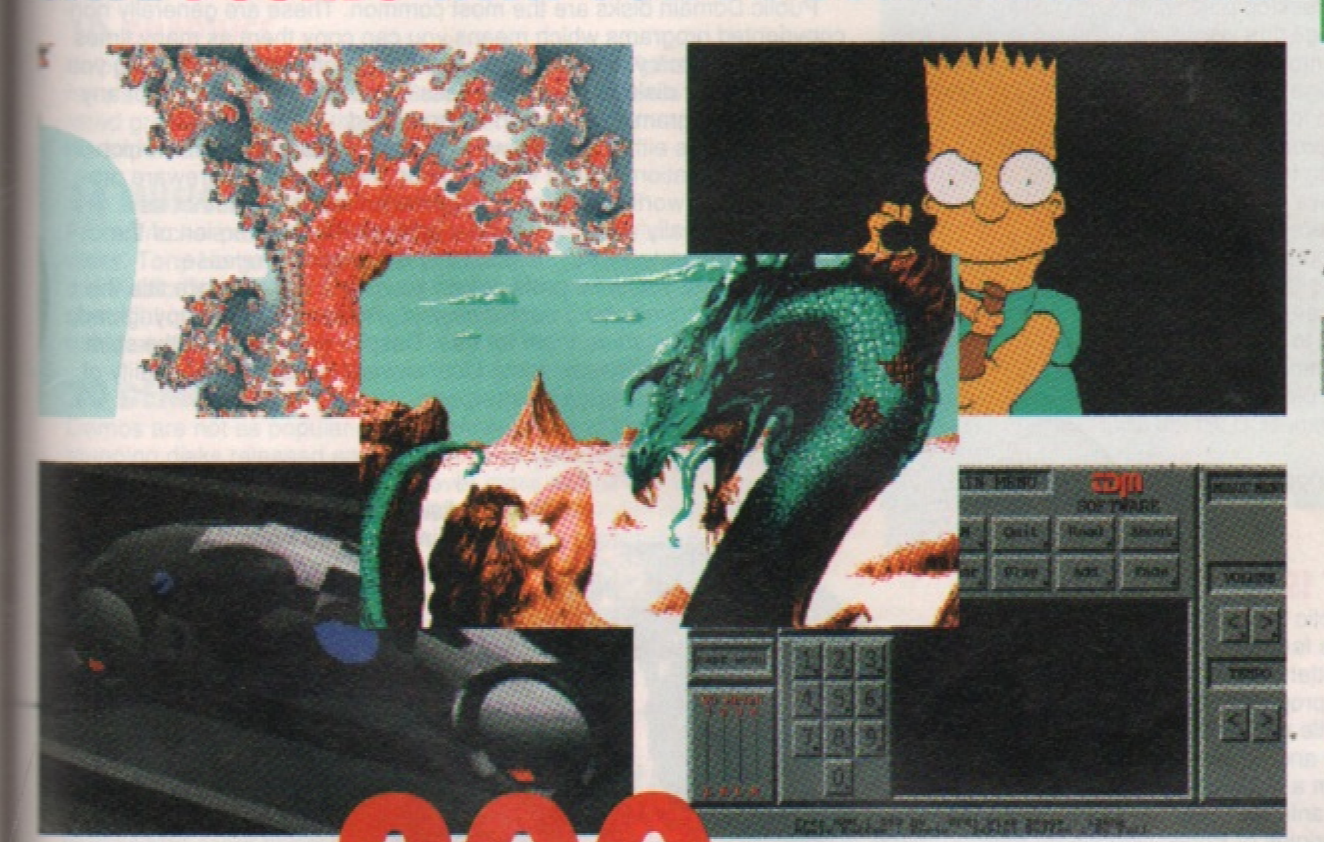
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THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE AMIGA

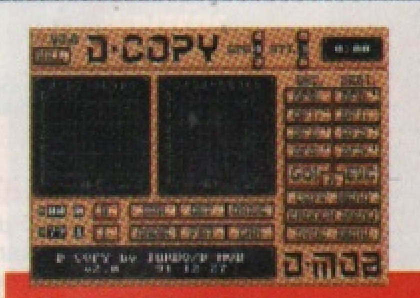
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MUSIC P14



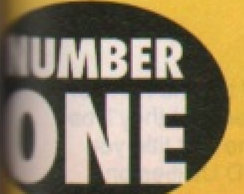

DEMOS P20



UTILITIES P22


ANIMATION P26

OVER 200 PROGRAMS REVIEWED AND RATED



FREE!

EXCLUSIVE TO CU AMIGA MAGAZINE!
PART ONE OF THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE AMIGA EVER PUBLISHED.

WHAT IS PD?

What's this? A free magazine? And it claims it's going to save me a fortune on software? Yes, that's right. So for more information, read on...



WELCOME to the very first Amiga Guide, free with the November issue of CU Amiga. Over the coming months, the Amiga Guide will cover every aspect of the Amiga, from programming, graphics and music to animation, video, desktop publishing and games. Each free magazine will cover a distinct topic, building up into one of the most complete guides to the Amiga ever published. Next month we'll be taking a look at the many different types of game genres and making our own personal selection from each category. The following month we'll be publishing a huge Amiga Beginners manual which will teach you everything you need to know about Commodore's amazing family of machines.

I sincerely hope you enjoy these guides, brought to you at no extra cost. If you have any comments or suggestions for future guides, please don't hesitate to drop me a line at the usual CU Amiga address.

Dan Slingsby, Editor.

WHAT IS PD?

The Public Domain offers a wealth of free software for your Amiga – often as good as, if not better than, a lot of full-price commercial programs. For the price of a disk and a little money to cover such things as postage and packing, you can take your pick from a stack of great games, utilities, demos, animation and applications.

The origins of Public Domain go back to the early days of computing when groups of enthusiasts would get together and create original programs of their own. These they would distribute freely between their friends to garner recognition for their coding skills. Nowadays, the PD scene has grown into a thriving industry with countless PD libraries serving an ever-growing number of enthusiasts. Standards are rising all the time.

This special first edition of the Amiga Guide is here to help make your purchasing decisions that much easier as we individually rate all the best releases as well as providing comprehenisve ordering information.

THREE-IN-ONE

Just to make things a little confusing, there are three types of PD software. These are: Public Domain disks; Shareware; and Licenseware.

Public Domain disks are the most common. These are generally non-copyrighted programs which means you can copy them as many times as you like. Often you'll find messages in the software encouraging you to do so. Many disks also carry notices forbidding the alteration of any part of the program. This should be honoured.

Shareware is either a cut-down version of a program or one which requires a donation be sent to the author. If you use a Shareware program a lot, it's worth sending the registration fee to the author as he/she will usually supply you with a more up-to-date version of the software with features not included in the Shareware release.

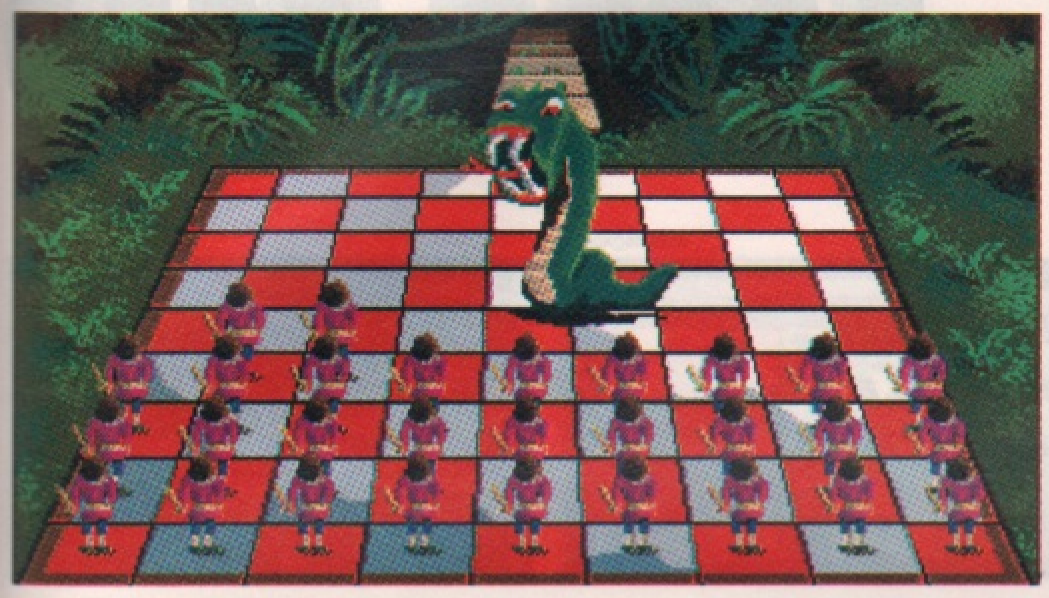
Licenseware exists for profit. When you buy a Licenseware title the author gets a royalty from each disk sold. These disks are copyrighted, so you cannot distribute them for free. Despite going against the spirit of public domain software, some Licenseware disks rival the quality of their commercial full-price counterparts.

WHAT'S UP DOC

Most PD disks come without packaging or written instructions. Instead most disks contain files called Read Me.Docs, or something along those lines. It pays to look at these first as they will contain information on how to install and use the software you have bought. To find these you might have to load up Workbench before inserting the disk.

VIRUS

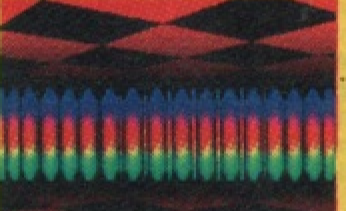
Many PD disks are compiled overseas and because of the the number of machines the disks pass through, you can't guarantee that they'll be virus free. So if you're going to invest in PD software the first title you should buy is a virus killer (for more information, see PD Utilities on



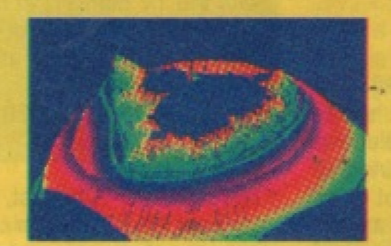
There's a wealth of free games available on the PD network at a fraction of the cost of commercial games.

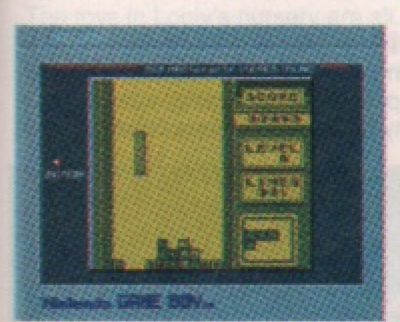
contents











The Gameboy comes to the Amiga.

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Mark Patterson
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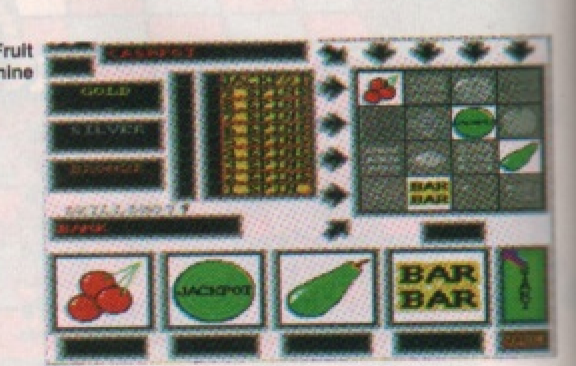
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CU Amiga
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This issue of Amiga Guide is free with the November issue of CU Amiga, Britain's leading Amiga magazine. It is not to be sold separately.

TOP 100 PD

If it's games you're after, then you've come to the right place. Over the next six pages we'll be taking a look at the best that the Public Domain has to offer.


Amos Fruit Machine



1. ENSIGNIA MAYHEM
This is yet another PD version of *Oids*. As in the original game, you pilot a ship through a series of narrow caverns, only this time you're in search of escaped convicts. All the time you come under a constant barrage of missiles and lasers.
76% PD Soft 2455

2. INTRUDER
Remember the age-old coin-op *Beserk*? Well, this is a faithful conversion. The object is simply to escape from a series of rooms filled with robots. Hang around too long and the indestructible evil Otto comes after you. Not much to look at, but it plays every bit as well as the coin-op original.
85% PD Soft 2483

3. BATTLE CARS 2
Get behind the wheel of a heavily-armed car as you race around five different tracks shooting at other human players or computer vehicles. This is the sequel to the good, but uncontrollable *Battle Cars*. It's a lot easier to play, and good fun in two-player mode.
80% NBS CLG09

4. ARAZMAX
The object of this game is dead simple, all you have to do is destroy a series of multiplying blobs. It may sound dull, but it's very playable, although not as good as *Microbes*, on which it's based.
79% 17-bit 1977

5. BLITZ
Although very simple, *Blitz* is remarkably addictive. Basically it's a reworked version of the ancient game *Bomber*. You pilot a plane over a city, and as it gets lower you have to destroy all the buildings to create a landing strip, only in this version you get different weapons such as lasers and missiles.
91% Crazy Joe Disk: Blitz

6. FLAG CATCHER
The main screen of this game consists of a number of tiles, under which lie hazards such as bombs or a flag. The aim is, quite simply, to find the flag within a set time by turning over as few tiles as possible. Help is given by pointer arrows which are revealed each time a tile is turned. Addictive at first, but it pales a little after a few goes.
60% Strictly PD G370

7. THINK TWICE
This game is based on the yonks-old Mastermind board game (remember, the one that had the coloured pegs and nothing to do with the TV series?). It involves a mixture of strategy and guess work as you attempt to work out what combination of coloured pegs your opponent has.
79% Battle Axe PD 926

8. E-TYPE
Not only is *E-Type* fast, it's also a contender for best PD game ever. It's like a cross between *Asteroids* and *Project X*. Your ship is controlled by rotating it left and right and thrusting forward with its rockets. There are loads of special weapons and some huge aliens to best. Very addictive and varied, a must for your PD collection.
94% Battle Axe PD 947

9. GALAGA '92
This is a very traditional shoot 'em up, with lots of classic features. There are multitudes of aliens, attack formations and large end of level bosses. It's very colourful, varied and extremely challenging, if not wholly original.
80% Ground Zero G117

10. ESCAPE FROM THARKAN
Although the title suggests an RPG, *Escape From Tharkan* is actually a *Breakout* clone. While much of the game is spent bouncing projectiles off walls, clicking the right mouse button transforms your bat into a space craft which blasts up the screen. A good variation on an old theme.
79% Virus Free PD 2403

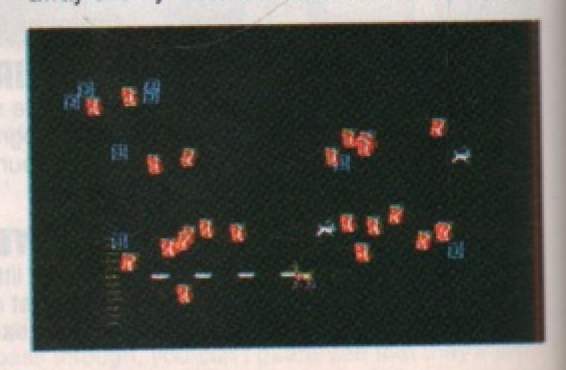
11. OPERATION LEMMING
This is what you get when you cross *Operation Wolf* with *Lemmings*. Basically, the Lemmings parachute, climb, crawl and stagger onto the screen, and all you have to do is place a gun sight over them then let rip with a volley of bullets. Fun, and part of the price goes to charity.
73% 17-Bit

12. LEMMINGOIDS
This is the second PD game featuring those irrepressible Lemmings. This one's based on *Asteroids*, with your ship being replaced with an umbrella and the rocks with Lemmings. Loads of excellent sampled sounds and a two player mode make this great fun.
90% 17-Bit

13. WILLIE'S WATER WORKS
If you've played *Pipemania* you'll know all about his game. It involves laying down pieces of pipe, which appear in a random order, in an attempt to build a pipeline. It's very simple, and a little like *Tetris* in parts. Maddeningly addictive.
89% NBS L511

14. WILBERT'S WINTER WONDERLAND
Wilf, the star of PD game *Son Of Wilf*, is back in this festive platform romp. He's armed with crackers which have to be pulled apart to make them explode, the debris of which comes crashing down on Wilf's enemies. Fun and challenging.
86% Deja Vu PD

15. RAID III
Raid is a simple little shoot 'em up. Take your helicopter, pilot it through a jungle blowing away enemy tanks and soldiers, then get back



GAMES



to base in time for tea and biscuits. No power-ups, no gobsmacking features, but plenty of action.
80% NBS G281

16. TETREN

Yes!!! At last a decent PD *Tetris* game – with a two-player mode. While *Tetren* is a little slow at times, the two player mode makes it great fun, and there are loads of extra features later on, such as blocks which disappear and strange shapes forming in your *Tetren* wall.
88% 17-Bit

17. LLAMATRON

Old hacks and Vic 20 users will have no trouble remembering Jeff Minter and his classic games. *Llamatron* is one such spaced-out title. Basically it's just another shoot 'em up but there are so many little touches such as bizarre sampled sounds and outrageous attack waves that it's definitely worth checking out.
90% Valley PD

18. DRAGON TILES

Mahjong is an ancient Chinese game where the object is to remove patterned tiles from a board by selecting two of the same pattern which each have a gap on at least one side. *Dragon Tiles* sticks faithfully to this theme, although there are some strange patterns of tiles, including one in the shape of the USS Enterprise.
77% NBS CLG08

19. LOOLY

The toys in Looly's nursery are all out to get him. Fortunately, Looly is tougher than your average sprog, and in this *Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit*-created game he can blast them with love hearts.
77% Softville SOF829

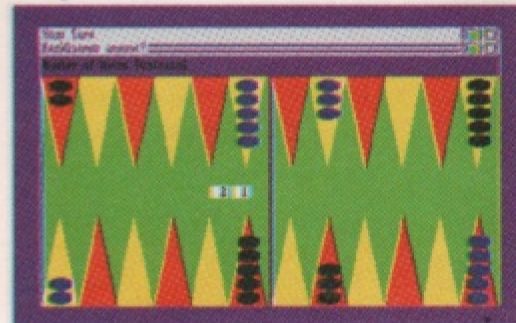
20. SUPER AMIDASH

Based on the C64 classic *Boulderdash, Super Amidash* is one of the most addictive PD games available. Negotiate underground caverns in search of gems while trying to avoid the local fauna and falling rocks. Simple and excellent.
94% Amiganuts

21. DOODY

This addictive single-screen platform game is

Backgammon



a cross between *Bubble Bobble* and *Manic Minor.* The objective is simple: jump at the underside of a platform to stun any creature standing on it, then leap up for the kill. Top arcade action.
93% Start 1539

22. MISSION X

Like *Raid III*, this is a vertically scrolling helicopter shoot 'em up. The graphics are very well drawn and the action comes thick and fast. What it lacks are power-ups and decent sound effects, otherwise it's a good blast.
79% NBS G208



23. BLAST

In the vein of the classic *Battle Squadron*, comes *Blast*. As the names suggests, there's plenty of shooting to do in this vertically-scrolling space SEU. Good fun, but a little dated.
80% 17-Bit

24. HYPNOTIC LAND

Like *Klax*, the aim of *Hypnotic Land* is to manoeuvre coloured objects (balls, in this case) into buckets at the bottom of the screen. Addictive fun.
90% Deja Vu

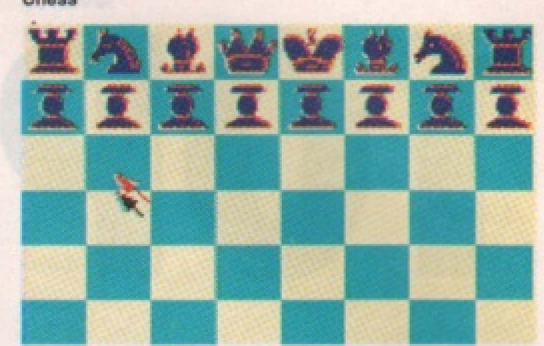
25. TOUCHSTONES

Based around Ishido, an 'ancient Chinese pastime', the aim of this game is to match tiles by colour and pattern, then place them on a board. Sounds silly, but you really need to play it to appreciate it.
87% Deja Vu

26. CAVE RUNNER

If you're a fan of *Boulderdash* or *Super Amidash*, you might want to check this out. *Cave Runner* isn't as good as the aforementioned games, but it has a few extra features and is still very playable. Featured on a CU cover disk.
83% Valley PD 1014

Chess





27. CYADONIA

Following on from *Cyad*, which was released last year, *Cyadonia* takes the same simple puzzle ideas and chucks in loads of new features for good measure. It's easy to get into and very challenging.
89% Deja Vu LPD67

28. QUATRIX

Quatrix borrows ideas from a number of games, including *Tetris*. The aim is to move the screen around to catch falling shapes and match them with those that came earlier. Original, easy to get into and great fun.
91% 17-Bit 1732

29. ASTEROIDS

Here's an amazing game for nostalgia freaks. This is identical to the original 1979 Atari coin-op, right down to the logo at the bottom of the screen. As playable as ever and a must for any collection.
93% NBS



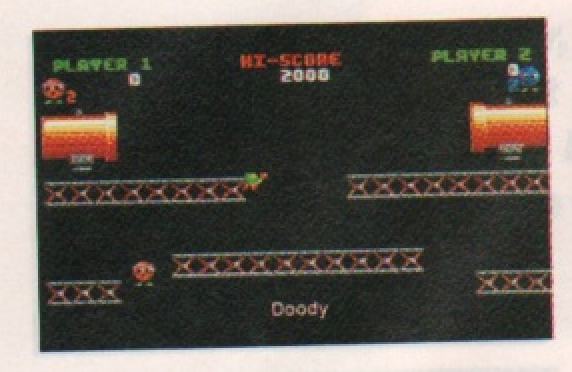
30. PACMAN '87

This is one of the better *Pacman* variants available on PD, it has nearly all the original features except for the sound. The omission of the 'wakka wakka' effects are the only things which detract from this game.
75% Blitterchips

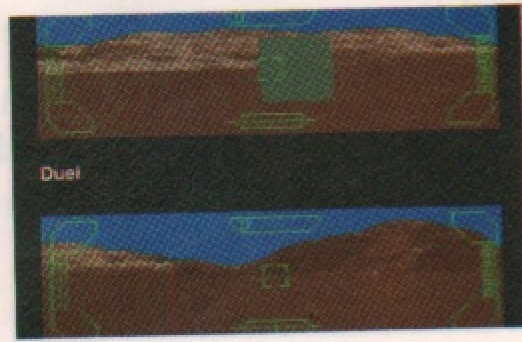
31. LADYBUG

Like *Pacman*, the object of *Ladybug* is to travel around a maze eating dots. There are a few nice features, but the graphics are crude. Still, it's playable all the same.84% 17-Bit

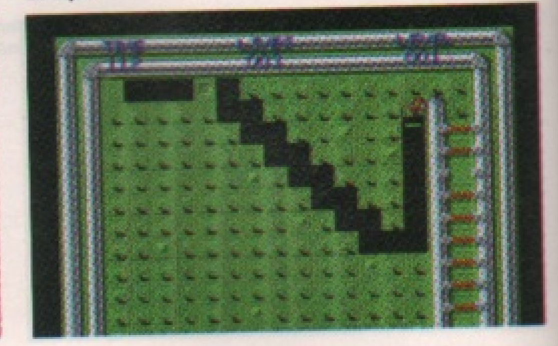
TOP 100 PD



Doody


Duel

Escape



32. ACT OF WAR
The author of this game acknowledges *Laser Squad* as his inspiration. Like that game you control a team of troops who have a number of missions to complete and a set number of moves each turn. Large, well programmed and very, very addictive.
90% 17-Bit 2197

33. TANK ATTACK
This game is novel in that it allows you to use a four-joystick adaptor. The aim is simple, you have to destroy the opposing tanks by chasing after them through a maze. It's top view, and there's nothing technical about it. Very playable though.
85% 17-Bit


Fight

34. OMEGA RACE
Crikey! This was originally a Vic 20 cartridge game back in the early '80s, and was very playable at the time. Even after a decade, this *Asteroids* derivative is still fun to play, if not very modern-looking.
82% 17-Bit (ASI 18)

35. MEGATRON
Based on the light-cycle scene from *Tron*, *Megatron* is a fast-paced two-player only game of nerves. Both cycles leave a trail behind them and the aim is to get your opponent to crash into one of them. Not much to look at, but it plays well.
78% 17-Bit (ASI 18)

36. SKYFLYER
Owing much to the coin-op *Flying Shark*, *Skyflyer* is yet another vertically-scrolling aircraft shoot 'em up. Although there's an element of seen-it-all-before, this is still a playable game, the only drawback is that it's a little too difficult at times.
80% 17-Bit

37. POWERPONG
Pong was one of the first TV console games back in the late '70s, and it's amazing to still find versions of it floating around. This one is two-player only, and apart from tarted up graphics the basic gameplay remains unchanged from that of its forbear.
80% Fortiss PD (ASI 12)

38. XFI
Without a doubt the best light cycles game available. It has one and two-player modes, the latter of which has a third computer-controlled cycle. There are hazards on screen and it requires pixel-perfect timing to get through gaps.
86% Fortiss PD (ASI 12)

39. REVENGE OF THE MUTANT CAMELS
Jeff Minter strikes again! This bizarre shoot 'em up is action packed, as you guide your camel alongside a computer-, or player two-, controlled yak. Weird and definitely wonderful. You won't find another blast like it.
85% Fortiss PD (ASI 25)

40. JUMPER
While a very simplistic conversion, this Frogger-clone is surprisingly addictive. Like the original, the aim is to guide a frog across a busy road, avoiding cars and trucks, and then steer him safely to his home on the other side of a river. One for nostalgia freaks.
74% Fortiss PD (ASI 24)

41. GO MOKU
This game is a kind of a cross between Connect Four and Othello. The objective is to lay five tiles in a row on a grid, while your opponent tries to thwart you while doing the same. The computer logic is the most outstanding feature about this game.
80% Fortiss PD (ASI 24)

42. JUMPY
The idea for this game could well have been translated into a full-price title. You control a character who can't stop jumping while aiming to avoid nasties and collect keys. Very playable indeed.
85% Fortiss PD (ASI 24)

43. KLONDIKE
We've had PD poker, now there's a PD patience game. *Klondike* is a very playable version of this game for card nuts who don't have any friends. There are pre-set high scores to beat, and you lose points every time you shuffle the pack or dawdle without making a move.
80% 17-Bit (ASI 24)

44. DUEL
While being very slow, *Duel* is still one of the best versions of *Battlezone* we've seen. You and a pal are each given a shiny new tank, dumped in a field and ordered to destroy each other. Simple and enjoyable.
80% 17-Bit (ASI 22)

45. MOUTH MAN
Yet another *Pacman* clone, only this time there's a level designer. Apart from that, though, it has all the features common to *Pacman*, such as power-pills and fruit bonuses.
77% 17-Bit (ASI 22)

46. WIZZY'S QUEST
You and a wizard friend are out exploring old dungeons in this fantastic little puzzle game. Crystals have to be collected and the only trick up your character's sleeve is his ability to create blocks out of nothing. A really excellent game.
92% 17-Bit (ASI 22)

47. ICE RUNNER
You are the Ice Runner, and with pick in hand it's your job to traverse caverns packed with dangerous creatures. Smash holes in the floor to trap them while you make off with their treasure. Fun platform japery. 81% ProDisc G-037


Flag Catcher

GAMES

Full House



48. HOLLYWOOD TRIVIA

How much do you know about Star Wars, eh? Hollywood Trivia tests your knowledge on this and several other subjects. When you get a question right part of a digitised picture is revealed. Fun for a while, but the questions soon run out.
70% Fortiss PD (ASI 20)

49. GROWTH

Similar in some ways to *Breakout*, you control a bat which is steered around the screen. In


Growth

the centre is an ever expanding mass of bricks the centre of which has to be destroyed. Your bat is armed with a gun, and on some levels you have to guide a ball as well.
89% Fortiss PD (ASI 19)

50. FIGHT

Another *Pong* clone, only this one is very fast, and there are plenty of hazards to avoid. If you haven't got a game like this, check out *Fight*. It's great in two-player mode.
88% Fortiss PD (ASI 19)

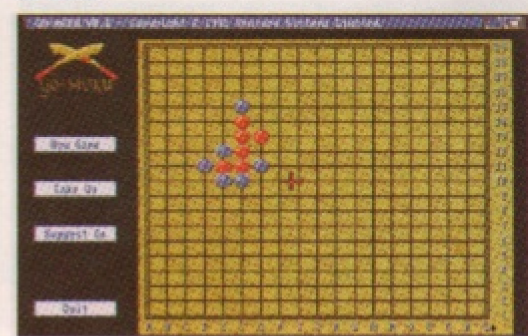
51. BI-PLANE DUEL

You probably won't remember this, but *Bi-plane Duel* is actually an old Intellivision game. It's two player only and the object is to quite simply blast your mate out of the skies. Easy to play, could do with a one player mode though.
80% Fortiss PD (ASI 19)

52. H-BALL

Quick simply, this is *Breakout* with no extras. There are no aliens and no weapons, but it's extremely fast with sensible ball logic. Worth checking out if you want to sharpen your reflexes. 77% Fortiss PD (ASI 19)

Go Moko



53. TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

You are Leather Face, complete with chain-saw. Your mission is to kill as many people as possible before your weapon runs out of petrol. Too silly to be sick, but worth buying for novelty value alone.
69% 17-Bit 1978

54. LIFE AFTER DEATH

Text-only adventures are a rarity nowadays, so it's quite nice to see a decent one like this. *Life After Death* has a novel twist in that you actually control two different characters. The parser can handle some surprisingly complex phrases and the game is generally well structured.
82% 17-Bit 1978

55. MR WOBBLY VS THE INVADERS FROM SPACE

Ignore the title, this is actually nothing more than space invaders with a match-stick man instead of a base-ship. Still, it's almost impossible to make a bad version of *Space Invaders*, which is a fact well proven here.
80% 17-Bit (ASI 25)

56. TANX

More tank-related action. This time you're on one side of a hill and your opponent is on the other. You can raise the elevation of your gun and set the power of the projectile, as you try to blast your mate to smithereens. Good, clean fun.
82% 17-Bit (ASI 1)

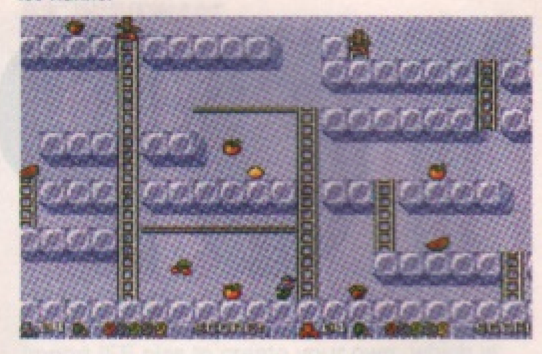
57. ROLLERPEDE

Yet another blast from the past. This is really Centipede with a starry background. Like the coin-op it's good fun, although this version isn't as good as the original.
73% 17-Bit (ASI 1)

58. MAMBA MOVE

Guide your caterpillar around a static screen collecting apples to prevent it from starving. Every time it eats one it grows longer and it's instant death if it touches its own body, so things get very complicated after a minute or so. Enjoyable enough.
75% 17-Bit (ASI 15)

Ice Runner



59. QUICK MONEY

Another two-tanks in one maze game. As with the others, you and your mate are out to kill each other, but this game scrolls and is split screen, which makes it very playable indeed. It could have done with a proper computer opponent though.
83% Fortiss PD (ASI 23)

60. INTERFERON

Seen *Dr Mario* on the NES or Gameboy? This is that game. Renamed and changed slightly, the format's still the same. Like *Tetris*, objects fall from the top of the screen, only this time you're trying to match colours. Not as playable as *Tetris*, but fun all the same.
80% Fortiss PD (ASI 23)

61. WASTELANDS

Set in a land where the inhabitants glow in the dark, *Wasteland* is a 3D adventure which pits you against all kinds of dangerous traps. It was created on Domark's *3D Construction Kit*, and is very detailed, although it is a little slow at times which is frustrating.
75% Fortiss PD (ASI 28)

62. THRALLBOUND

The graphics in this adventure game all have a pencil-drawn look to them, whether they have been digitised or are computer generated isn't made clear. The object of the game is to escape from the clutches of a group of Vikings. Your problems are hampered by an inadequate parser which is the only thing that spoils the game.
70% 17-Bit

Iron Clads

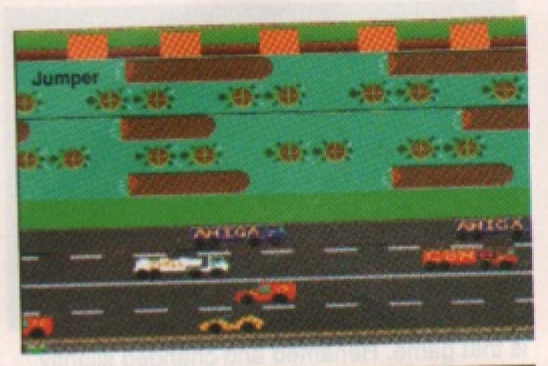
63. SPACE INVADERS 2

If you want to preserve a sense of tradition, this could be the game for you. It's a little more colourful than the *Invaders* coin-ops, but it has all the same features and is a respectable enough conversion of an historic game.
77% 17-Bit (ASI 28)

64. PICK OUT

This is a strange sort of memory game. It uses the old 'pick two squares and try to make a match' format, but the graphics have a strange style which makes some of the shapes a little difficult to memorise. 69% 17-Bit (ASI 28)

TOP 100 PD





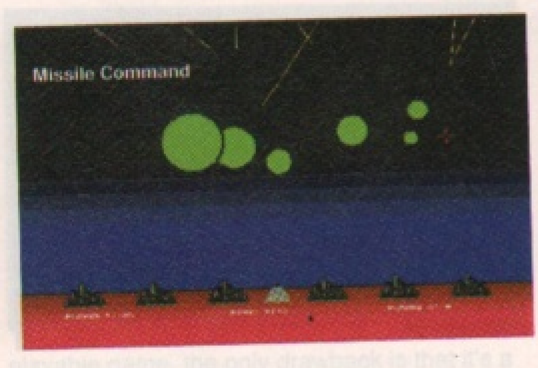
65. DRIP
You'll probably remember *Drip* from one of our coverdisks earlier this year. This paint'n'run game puts you in control of a blue blob of a chap who you must guide around 16 maze-like pipe systems, rusting the pipes as you go while avoiding the many nasties. Cracking stuff.
94% Virus Free PD

66. MISSILE COMMAND
Nuclear missiles are heading towards five major cities, and as the controller of an SDI system it's your job to shoot them down. This is an excellent interpretation of the classic coin-op, all it's missing is the trackball.
85% 17-Bit 1243

67. SPACE WAR
It's all-out combat in deep space as you do battle with your mate or a computer-controlled ship around a black hole. Fast and playable, although it can be a little frustrating at times.
78% 17-Bit 1243

68. OTHELLO
Yet another board game finds its way onto a PD disk. The outstanding feature of this version is the computer logic, which can tax all but the most devious of Othello players.
80% 17-Bit 2105

69. PETER'S QUEST
At first look, this platform game seems nothing out of the ordinary, but playing it you soon find that this is a not half-bad Mario wannabe. If it wasn't for some dodgy controls and even dodgier collision detection this would have been one of the best PD games ever.
80% PD Soft 2396



70. CRAZY SUE
Sue is the star of this platform game which lies somewhere between *Mario* and *Rainbow Islands*. The graphics and gameplay are both top-notch (although the music's poor) and there are plenty of good ideas. A must for platform fans.
87% Virus Free 2172

71. SUB ATTACK
The enemy navy is closing in and you're the only person that can stop them. Launch torpedoes at the boats as they steam past in this conversion of the 1980 coin-op. Fun for a while, but ultimately very limited.
68% 17-Bit 2105

72. AMOS FRUIT MACHINE
All the fun of a real fruit machine, but it doesn't nick your 10ps. On the other hand, it doesn't pay out wins, so you might find this a bit boring after only a few goes.
72% Virus Free

73. ZALYCON
This is a mixture of arcade game styles such as *Moon Buggy* and *Defender*, with a neat story line and cut-scenes thrown in. The only problem is the ridiculous amount of disk swapping which will irritate single drive users.
78% 17-Bit 2158

74. DOMINOES
What can be said? Even the great pastime of matching spotty tiles has made it onto the PD scene, complete with a cheat option that lets you see your opponent's tiles. Becomes dull after a few games.
69% 17-Bit 2163

75. DEATHBRINGERS FROM SPACE
Deathbringers looks very simple, the graphics consisting of nothing more than a starfield and a few rough ships, but it's really an enjoyable little shoot 'em up which taxes the sharpest of reflexes.
72% 17-Bit 1213

76. TINY BALL
The authors of this game claim it's the world's smallest baseball sim. All it takes up is a small window on the Workbench desktop. Despite its size and lack of thrills, it's still fun for a while. 71% 17-Bit 1213


Mouth Man



77. AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL
Yes, you've read it right, this is a PD Air Traffic Control sim. Try to guide in up to 100 planes or, if you're bored, direct them at each other. Either way, this is quite a novel little game.
72% 17-Bit 1213

78. DIPLOMACY
This is a cut-down version of the board game that retains most of its best elements. The read-me doc is essential reading if you want to play this very rewarding, but complicated strategy number.
80% 17-Bit 890

79. LORN
Although it's five years old now, *Lorn* is still a good little RPG. The graphics aren't much to look at and the plot is minimal, but the game is playable and makes a nice distraction from the usual shoot 'em ups.
75% 17-Bit 781

80. BET 'N' WIN
Back a winner in this PD horse racing game without the pain of losing your money. The horses all have form guides, odds set by your computer bookie and you can place your fictional cash on trebles and accumulators.
78% 17-Bit

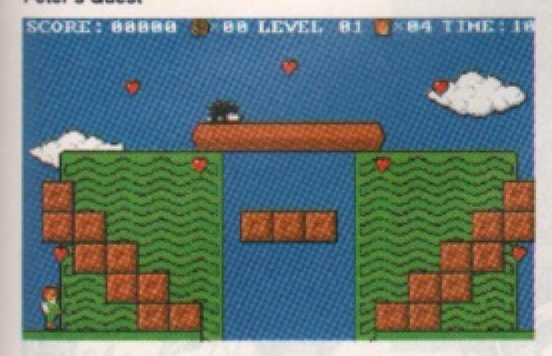
81. FULL HOUSE
Poker is the subject of this title. Play against a sneaky computer opponent as you attempt to hustle him out of his cash. It also includes a score guide so you can find out whether a flush beats a full house.
73% Virus Free 2843

82. TRIX
The name may not be the same, but this is



GAMES

Peter's Quest



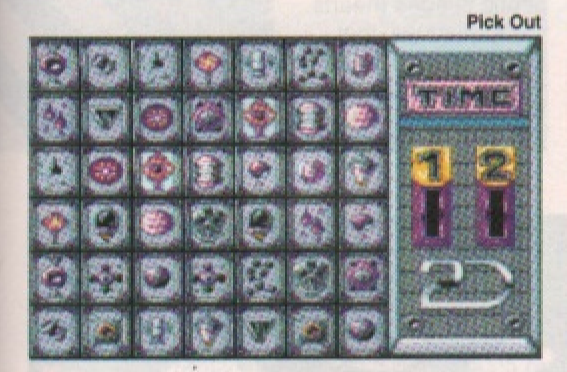
definitely *Quix*. The aim is to guide your dot around the screen drawing boxes and avoiding hazards. Dead simple and totally addictive.
85% 17-Bit (ASI 7)

83. TOP SECRET
Life couldn't be simpler in this platform game – collect treasure and hurl bombs at nasties. Nothing top secret, but still very playable with some fiendishly designed levels.
80% 17-Bit 2150

84. ANTEP
One of the few PD RPGs, this one just happens to look a mite like some of the *Ultima* games. Plagiarism forgiven, this is a complicated and well thought out game that will hold your attention for many hours.
87% 17-Bit

85. IRON CLADS
Sample life on the high seas in this naval battle simulator. It's a dedicated wargame, so prepare to spend a few hours getting to grips with it, otherwise you'll be hopelessly lost.
82% PD Soft 2485

Pick Out





Quick Money

Selge Of The Beast



86. TURBO THRUST
Take to the narrow tunnels of the Arena Of Death as you and a pal race it out in flashy space craft. It's a pity that this game is two-player only, as it's fast and action-packed, but unplayable without a mate.
81% 17-Bit

87. LINES
This is another title which falls into the 'simple but addictive' category. The aim is to place lines between several points without intersecting. Sounds simple? It definitely isn't.
73% 17-Bit

88. ESCAPE
Trapped in a room where the floor disintegrates when you walk over it, you only get one chance to work your way to the exit and escape. Taxing, with plenty of levels to keep you hooked.
82% 17-Bit

89. LEAP
Only read this if you're a nostalgia freak. This game first appeared on the Spectrum about ten years ago, the aim being to leap through gaps in moving lines. Good if you've played it before, but most people will be put off by its relative simplicity.
65% 17-Bit

90. SIEGE OF THE BEAST
There's a monster to be destroyed and only your soldiers are up to it. Played on a chess board, this game requires you to form a circle around the beast. Beware, it will eat any troops who get too close.
85% 17-Bit

91. TANK BATTLE
It's you and a pal kitted out with tanks and pitted in combat against each other. The view is from the top of the arena and bullets bounce off walls, so be careful not to shoot yourself.
79% Valley PD

92. SYS
First called *Q*Bert* then *Pongo*, it now resides on the PD circuit as SYS. The aim is to change the colour of tiles by jumping on them while avoiding the hazards which descend from the top of the screen. 90% 17-Bit

93. DRIVEWARS
A bizarre shoot 'em up which involves you flying through a computer trying to destroy a virus that's bent on destroying files on Iraqi positions during Desert Strike. Playable, despite the awful plot.
75% 17-Bit

94. PUZZ
Sliding block puzzles usually only rank as mildly diverting, this one, however, has a twist. Apart from the preset puzzles, you can also import IFF pics to create your own, which is fun.
80% 17-Bit

95. TREK TRIVIA
This is a similar game to Hollywood Trivia, but based exclusively on Star Trek. There's a database of 100 questions, with the option to purchase more from the author if you can answer them all.
74% PD Soft

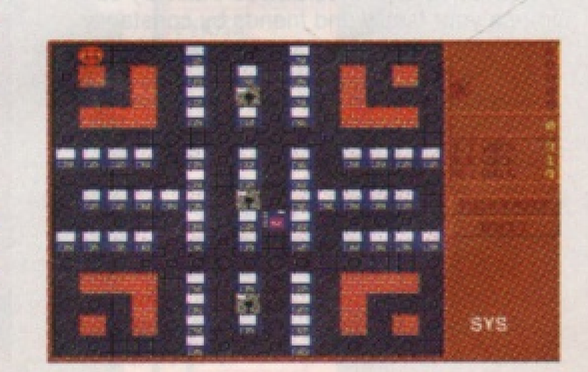
96. BACKGAMMON
Written to demonstrate artificial intelligence, this is one hell of a backgammon challenge. You're invited to play with the source code, so if you're really losing you could always throw a spanner in the A.I.'s works.
78% 17-Bit

97. MONOPOLY
Lost the pieces to your Monopoly set? Fear not, you can now buy the game from the Public Domain. This version has all the features of its board game counterpart, except the banker can't dip their hand in the till.
80% Virus Free

98. MOONBASE
Precision landing is called for in *Moonbase*. As the pilot of a lunar-lander it's your job to make sure the cargo is delivered safely, i.e. without you becoming part of the Moon's terrain. Occasionally frustrating, but it will keep you glued to your joystick.
85% PD Soft

99. ESCAPE FROM JOVI
This slickly produced arcade game features excellent scrolling, stereo sound and a multitude of other effects. It's also very playable, as you must overcome all kinds of devious trickery in your attempt to escape.
87% 17-Bit

100. CHESS
Where would we be without a PD chess game? Well here it is, complete with a huge arsenal of moves which turn your Amiga into a regular Kaspov. The source code is included so you can always be unsporting and nobble the computer.
89% 17-Bit



PD GRAPHICS

Commercial graphic packages can often cost an arm and a leg. Why face amputation when you could just as easily buy from the Public Domain?

Clip Art can radically enhance your DTP doodlings.

ALTHOUGH the Amiga is a truly multi-talented machine, its graphical abilities have gained it the greatest popularity. This aspect has been helped by the fact that Commodore have included a version of *Deluxe Paint* with every machine sold over the last few years. For graphics professionals there is a wealth of high-powered, high-priced tools available including 24-Bit cards, broadcast quality genlocks and digitisers, and a range of software often costing hundreds of pounds. However, you don't have to re-mortgage your house to discover the wonders of professional quality graphics; there are dozens of packages costing no more than a few pounds just waiting for you to discover them.

CHILDREN'S ART PACKAGES

As I just mentioned, just about every Amiga owner received a copy of *DPaint* when they bought their machine, so there's not really a lot of point looking at PD graphics packages as these tend to be vastly inferior. However, younger children may find *DPaint* a little complicated, and for them *Colouring Book* may be the ideal choice.The program contains a selection of black and white line-art drawings, and provides the child with 12 coloured pens shaped like rocket ships. When one of the pens is selected it 'takes off' with a whoosh and the menu disappears. By touching the screen with the tip of the pen, the child can fill an area with the selected colour. Suitable music accompanies the child's efforts, although this can be turned off. When your child has completed his/her masterpiece,it can be saved as an IFF screen so that they can irritate your family and friends by constantly showing off their awesome(!) capabilities. (Deja Vu, Disk code: LPD82).

More creative children may also enjoy using *Kid's Paint*, a cheerful and easy to use art package. The program provides them with a sixteen colour palette and a few simple-yet-fun drawing tools such as cycle draw, symmetry and fill. All program options are represented by large brightly coloured icons, and should keep the little brats, erm... angels, quiet for a good couple of hours. (Virus Free, Disk code: 2203)

CLIP ART

From one type of pre-drawn image to another, clip art is a useful time saver for a variety of applications ranging from desk top publishing (DTP) to video production work. It comes in a variety of formats depending on its intended application. Clips for DTP are usually monochrome (black and white) or grey, and will often be stored in medium resolution, either as IFF screens or brushes. Often in the form of simple line art or scanned images, there are hundreds of DTP clip art disks available covering everything from humour and animals to banners and motorbikes. My current favourite is a set of old fashioned woodcuts illustrating the different months of the year. Essex Computer Systems are the largest supplier of clip art in Europe so phone them on 0268 553963 to see if they have what you require. Clip art can also be used as the basis for your own drawings, and for this type of application coloured images are more useful. For example, the *Walt Disney Clip Art* disk contains a wide selection of famous Disney cartoon characters including Thumper, Tinker Bell, Donald Duck, Pluto and many others.

With a bit of creative flair you can even use the images as the basis for your own animations. (PD Soft, Disk code: V689).

With the cheap availability of video genlocks, video clip art has become increasingly popular recently. Full colour clip art is usually designed for use in video intros and program breaks. *Harlequin Video Art* provides a prime example of the genre as it contains many images divided into nine popular categories, including weddings, birthdays and engagements. There are basically two types of graphics on the disk. Frames are screens in which a blank 'window' has been left for a video image to show through. Then there are Ornaments, which are small standalone images (hearts, bells, plaques, that type of thing). These


Looks suspiciously like Christmas wrapping paper to me.


Kid's Paint may look basic, but that's the whole point.


Colouring Book helps kids get to grips with computer art.

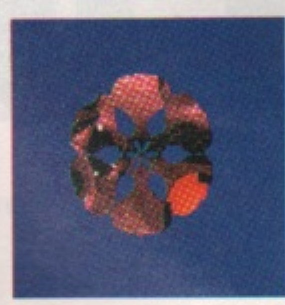
Bars'n'Tone is a test sheet for adjusting your camera's colour and sound.

can be overlaid onto a video picture to add interest or as an unusual way of listing credits, etc. (Strictly PD, Disk code:U380). *TV Graphics* consists of a number of high resolution backgrounds, over which you can scroll titles and credits, etc. Not much else to say about these except that they look great! (17-Bit, Disk code:1698B)

Harlequin Video Art complements your video productions.

VIDEO TOOLS

Staying with the theme of video production, there are now dozens of programs to help you create really professional video effects for a minimal outlay. One essential purchase for any home video/genlock buff is the video production set from 17-Bit Software. This comes on two disks, which between them contain 27 useful video tools and ten IFF backgrounds and ornaments. These include basics such as *Bars'n'Tone*, a test sheet for adjusting your camera's colour and sound balance, more advanced programs such as Peel, Melt and Dissolve for creating interesting screen transitions and expert-level utilities such as *TimeCalc* for calculating SMPTE time codes. (17-Bit, Disk code:1698A&B) . For the advanced video user, Video Wipes contains 24 broadcast-style screen wipes including Melt, Circle Pattern, Diamond and Confetti. These wipes are stored as *DPaint* animations and with care they can be used to create complex transitions from one video image to another. To be honest, they will require a bit of effort to use effectively, but the results will be as professional as anything on TV. (PD Soft, Disk code: V687)



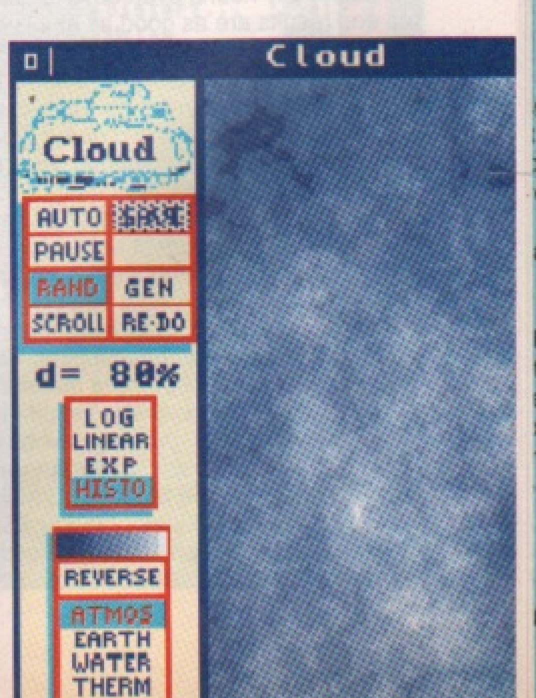
Fractal generators are capable of all kind of weird shapes.



LANDSCAPE GENERATORS

Fractal landscape generators are an ideal choice for people who want to create attractive scenes without the effort of drawing them by hand. There are currently at least half a dozen such programs competing for your attention, and many of them are of commercial quality. The best is undoubtedly a program called *Scene Generator*. Unlike its commercial rival *Vista*, it can't load real landscapes (in the form of Digital Elevation Maps), but it creates scenes which are every bit as believable. It allows you to specify such variables as the sea, snow and grass levels, before using a fractal 'seed' number to create an imaginary scene. It supports two levels of detail and you can alter the colours used for rendering. If you're interested in fractal landscape creation, you really must get yourself a copy of *Scene Generator*. (Strictly PD, Disk code: U299). Other offerings in this category include *Cloud 9, Landscape* and *Scenery*. All three can be found on one bumper compilation disk. (17-Bit, Disk code: 1697)





PD GRAPHICS



If you're interests extend to fractals, there are a host of useful programs available on the PD network to help you get fantastic results.

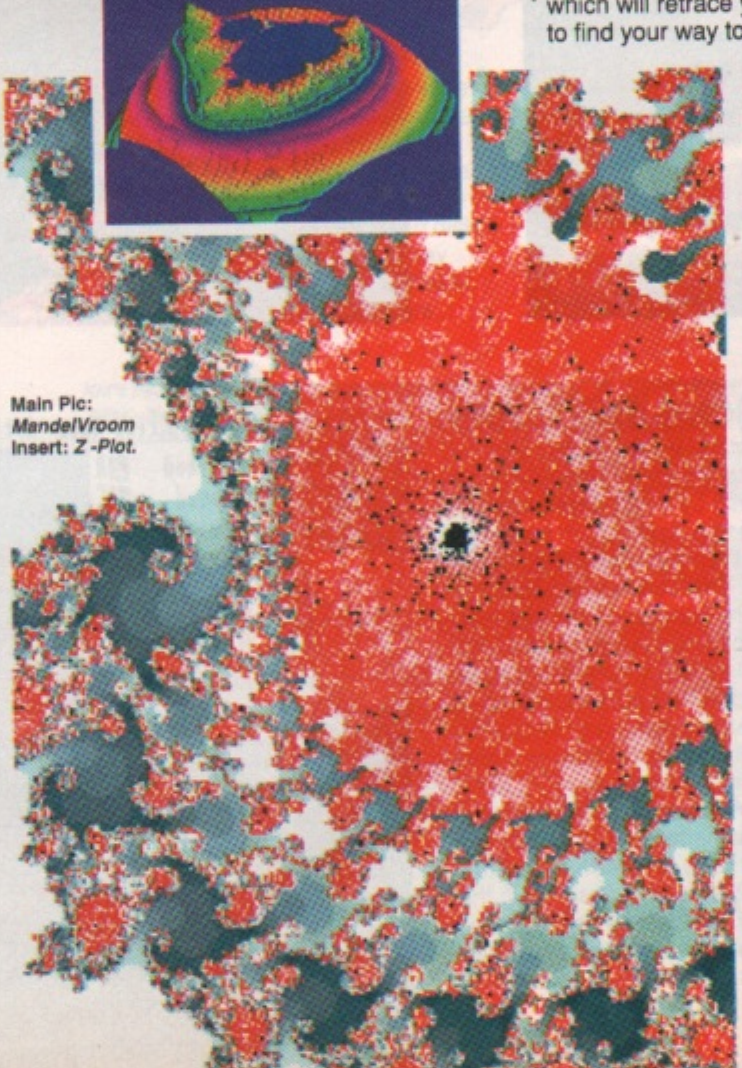


Turn the lights down low, put on some hardcore beats and watch the light show.

RAY TRACING PACKAGES

From computer generated landscapes to computer generated objects, ray tracing lets you create real or imaginary objects which your Amiga will then attempt to render (draw) with photographic realism. In terms of results, *DBW Render* is still the best PD program in this category, and it contains most of the important features found in commercial packages. Its only disadvantage is the fact that all objects and scenes must be defined in script form rather than by actually positioning lines and points on-screen. If you're mathematically minded, this can work to your advantage as it lets you create objects with much greater precision. *DBW* supports multiple light sources and variable refraction and reflection levels allowing you to create objects as diverse as wood or glass. Any remotely complex scene will take many hours, even days to draw, but the end results are as good as any I've seen on the Amiga. (PD Soft, Diskcode: V486)

McFrac is a handy utility for creating ray-tracable landscapes. Written by Tobias Richter, a prolific Star Trek fanatic and demo creator, it converts fractal landscapes into *Sculpt 3D* compatible scenes, into which you can incorporate any other 3D objects that you may have created. As a perfect accompaniment to *McFrac, ABConverter* converts bit-mapped fonts into *Sculpt* compatible objects. If you own a ray tracing package that supports either texture wrapping or bump mapping, *Textures* is a great collection of suitable material all stored as IFF screens. These include images of planetary surfaces, buildings, wood grain, landscapes, etc. Tobias Richter fans will recognise many of the textures from his *Dune Slideshow* demo. All three of the above programs can be found on one disk (Strictly PD, Disk code: U285).



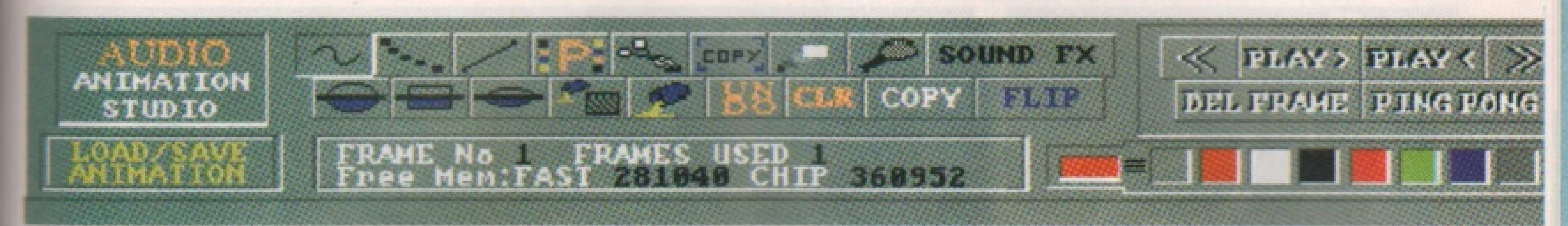
Main Pic: *MandelVroom*
Insert: *Z -Plot.*

PD FRACTAL SOFTWARE

I couldn't finish the subject of computer generated images without briefly mentioning fractals, the branch of mathematics that can be used to create intricate and beautiful pictures. Deriving from the work of Belgian mathematician Benoir Mandelbrot, fractal mathematics has given rise to entirely new ways of thinking about science. His formulae can be applied to subjects as apparently dissimilar as weather systems, population dispersal and plant growth.

For most of us, however, it is for its artistic possibilities that fractal maths has become famous. The greatest problem with fractal drawings is the amount of time that they take to generate. On an ordinary A500 the simplest image (dubbed 'The bug') can be drawn in less than five minutes but to draw anything more complicated can take hours or even days. For this reason, a number of programs have been created which try to perform the necessary calculations at a faster rate than usual. *MandelVroom* is one such program, and it provides support for a variety of additional processors and maths co-pros. It allows you to zoom into any part of an image, and even lets you create scripts which will retrace your steps when you want to find your way to a particular location in the future. The scripts can also be used to create animations. Using the program's palette and cycling options, you can create fantastic and abstract images with a minimum of effort. (17-Bit, Disk code: MandleVroom)

If you have a very good understanding of maths, you may be interested in a program called *Z-Plot* which plots the results of formulae in the complex number plane in two and three dimensions. With such abstractions as applying the Mandelbrot set to Newton's method for solving quadratic equations, it's guaranteed to give your brain as much of a work-out as your computer. The resulting plotted images are quite different to traditional fractals, although the program can use both the Mandelbrot and Julia sets for calculations. (Strictly PD, Disk code: U312)



Audio Animation Studio lets you add sound to your animations.

PROGRAMMER'S TOOLS

Having created all of these marvellous graphics, what do you do with them? Well, one option is to compile them into a slideshow, and programs such as the *Slideshow Construction Set* and *Slideshow Generator* are ideal for this. However, if you require a slideshow that gives you a bit more control, *Still Store* is one possible solution. The program was written for the news desk of an American TV studio as a reliable way of displaying pictures to supplement the news items. In some ways it's quite unsophisticated, allowing only for plain image flipping as opposed to providing loads of flashy transitions. However, it is very simple to use and is guaranteed to work time after time. (PD Soft, Disk code:V519)



Still Store was developed by an American TV studio.

From slideshows, it's only a small step to creating your own animations. Of course, programs such as D-Paint support this feature, but the *Audio Animation Studio* goes one step better – it lets you add sound. In fact the program is quite basic, allowing for only eight colour animations, but it does support onion skinning, an animation aid whereby you can still see a faint version of the previous frame whilst you draw the new one. Having created an animation, a sound sample can be linked to each frame providing synchronised sound and movement for a fraction of the cost of *Movie* or *ComicSetter*.

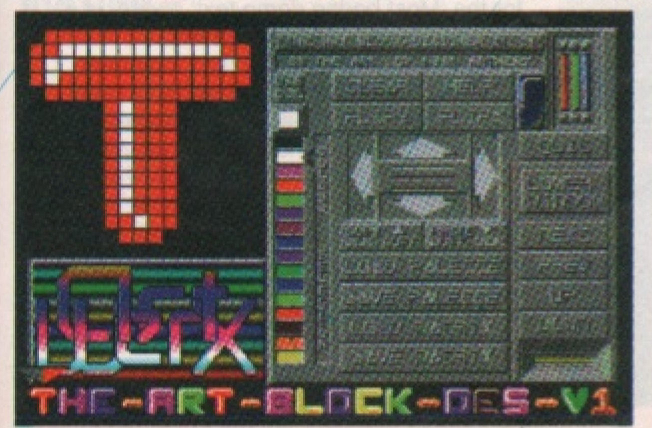
If you can program, a more efficient way of creating animation is by using sprites and blocks which occupy less memory and can be manipulated at faster speeds. Amiganuts have published a range of programs to help you do exactly that. The *Artwerx Sprite Designer* lets you work in four or 16 colour modes and provides you with a vast array of designing tools to let you flip, rotate and colour each sprite. The heart of the program is the sprite grid where you can make alterations to sprites up to 200 lines high by 20 pixels wide. As you build up successive sprites, you can use the program's animation facilities to test your work. There's little else to say about this program except that it also allows you to cut and paste sprites between various frames (Amiganuts, Disk code: 1102).

AMOS users may also be interested to hear about the *Sprite Bank Editor* which lets you test and edit sprite animations before you incorporate them into your program (Deja Vu, Disk code: LPD40). By creating a small number of graphics blocks, and duplicating them to make up a full-screen image, programmers can save huge amounts of memory. Of course, this means that they need some way to design and test the graphics. Although *DPaint* is used by some, many prefer a dedicated program such as the *Artwerx Block Designer*. Blocks are designed on a 16 by 16 grid and are then saved as raw data. This raw graphic information can subsequently be loaded into the *Artwerk Screen Designer* to be compiled into a screen (Amiganuts, Block Designer Disk code: 1106. Screen Designer Disk code: 1083).

PD IMAGE PROCESSING

Once you've created your screen, be it ray traced, fractal or hand drawn, the story doesn't have to end there. With image processing software, you can perform a vast number of modifications from the subtle to the bizarre. *Image Lab* was written in 1989, but as far as Amiga screens go, it still compares favourably to many of the modern commercial packages available. It supports a full range of boolean logic operations such as or/and/nor, etc, as well as including some very high powered filtering functions. So far as I know, it's the only PD program that will attempt to merge two non-HAM screens together. Most functions can be applied to either the entire screen, or just a part of it. Incidentally, although the program does run on my Amiga 500 Plus, it wasn't particularly stable, so if you get frustrated very easily you might want to give this one a miss. (PD Soft, Disk code: V518)

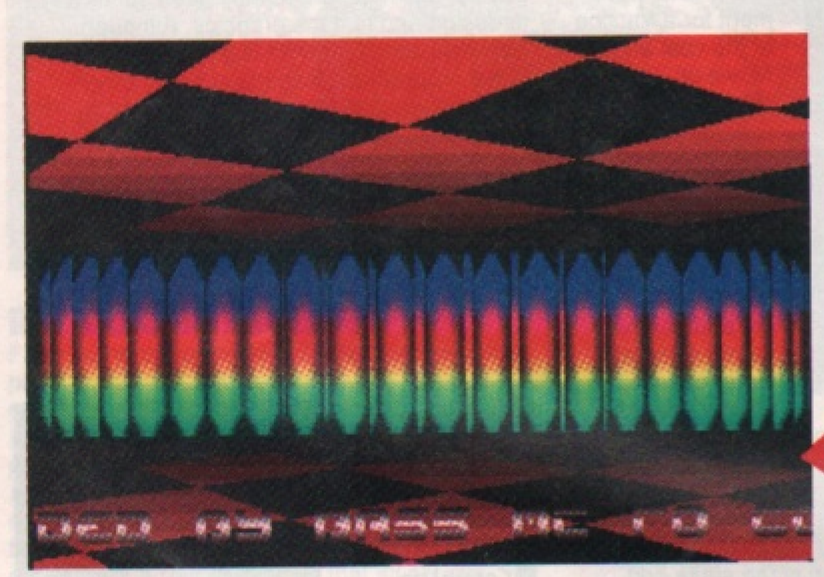
The *Artwerk Sprite Designer* is just one of a number of programs to help make your animations take up less space.



After image processing software? Look no further than *Image Lab*.

MUSIC DEMOS

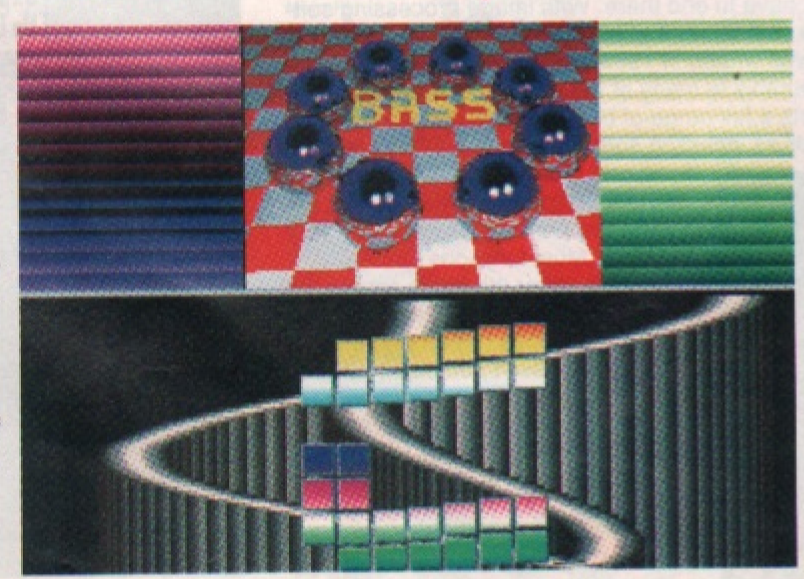
For a long time the sound capabilities of the Amiga were ignored, but now the machine's custom chip is being exploited to its fullest. Here are a selection of some of the best music demos currently available.



BASS MEGADEMO II
17-Bit

IF you've never heard a decent music demo, you could be forgiven for thinking the Amiga was only capable of producing basic beeps, boings and grating lead synth sounds. The full sonic potential of the machine is rarely exploited in most games, mainly because a big soundtrack eats up memory that's better used for the game itself. With music demos however, the tables are turned. Now the emphasis is on clear, loud samples, and hard-hitting tunes. With the program code and graphics kept to a minimum, the musicians are free to take the Amiga's sound hardware to its limits. Hook your machine up to a decent hi-fi, then sit back and chill, or get up and party – the choice is yours. Before we begin, just a quick note about the crank factor. This directly relates to the recommended volume setting for your stereo. If for example, the demo's crank factor is 10, whack the volume up to 10 as well. Easy eh?

This is really more of a megademo than a pure music demo, but the sounds on it are so good that it would be impressive with just a blank screen. As it is, you're treated to a feast of multi-colour visuals, along with a series of fairly short, but extremely clear, original dance tracks. It all gets horizontal in the closing section, with a really mellow breakbeat – shame about that grating synth sound though.
Crank Factor: 9





NIGHTSHADE
17 Bit No. 1714

Here's something a bit different. Although the presentation is just a bog standard title pic and srolltext, the tunes themselves are a lot more adventurous.

First up is a very successful attempt at a bit of jazz. The shuffling bassline and light beat are topped by a meandering piano melody. Apart from the slightly plinky piano sample, it all sounds very real indeed, and makes a change from the norm. The second track, 'Unforgettable', is nothing to do with the old Nat King Cole song, but well worth cocking an ear to all the same. The backing is nothing to shout about, but it breaks the mould because of the original vocal samples. Sadly, although the samples are very clear, the vocal talents of the featured songstress leave something to be desired. From then on the demo sinks back into lift-music territory, before finishing off with a decent hard hitting rock tune. Definitely worth getting hold of, if you fancy something a bit different.

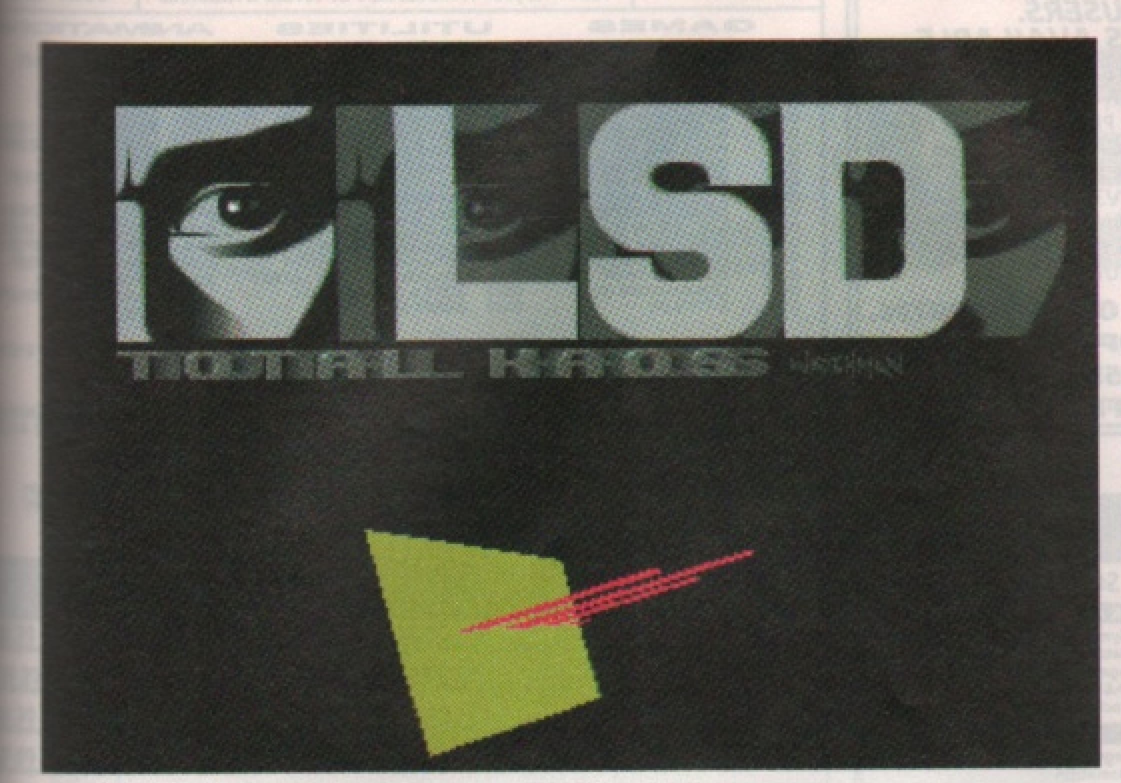
Crank Factor: 7

TECHNO B***ARDS
17 Bit No. 1451

Fronted by a neat but unadventurous title screen, over which scrolls another candidate for the 'Most boring demo text' award, is a non-stop twelve minute rave mix.

While the sound quality isn't top notch, some choice breaks and loops have been strung together for the opening stage of the mix. Unfortunately, the initial toe-tapping frenzy is thrown right off course by the apearance of a raggamuffin vocal sample, which is hopelessly out of time with the beat. The track picks itself up off the floor and gets funky once again, but only for short bursts, punctuated by further use of the sample. Shame really, because it's not half bad apart from that.

Crank Factor: 5





A TRIP TO TRUMPTON REMIX

NBS No. M445

Cross Urban Hype's novelty rave hit with TV comedy series Red Dwarf, and you've got the latest offering from Vark. Unfortunately, Brian Cant isn't featured on the mix (Hugh, Pugh, Barney McGroo, Cuthbert, Dibble, Grub, phweep!). Instead, the vocal interest comes from the Red Dwarf team, with speech samples from the program mixed over the main soundtrack.



The volume jumps around a bit between sections, as do the loops, and the samples are a bit on the grainy side. Despite the rough edges though, it still works quite well. The only substantial cock-up is one particularly loud sample that's thrown in all too often, drowning the rest. Fun while it lasts.

Crank Factor: 6

ROLLING

17 Bit No. 2002a & 2002b

For those seeking an alternative to the explosion of rave demos, the Rolling demo offers a sanctuary. Its two disks boot up with a trendy customised Workbench 2-style interface. The eight tracks vary in quality, although the sound reproduction is excellent throughout the tunes. The highlight is "Sun Ray", a smooth reggae groove that refrains from degenerating into twee melodies, carrying off the style very convincingly.

Crank Factor: 7

TOTAL CHAOS

17 Bit No. 2164a & 2164b

Get stomping! The latest from LSD is a right raving corker! Graphically, it's simple but effective, with multicoloured vector-equalizers spinning over a starfield. Sonically, it's a stunner.

It kicks off with some excellent chunky breaks, chewy techno basslines and a handful of assorted other good-enough-to-eat samples. It's all non-stop, right through to the end of the second disk, and won't let up until you pull the plug. The various stages are a bit drawn out now and then, and a few more vocals or hooks wouldn't have gone amiss. Even so, if you were off your nut at a rave, you'd be lapping it up. The mouse-controlled equalisers even let you jig the graphics in time with the music! Get it now.

Crank Factor: 9

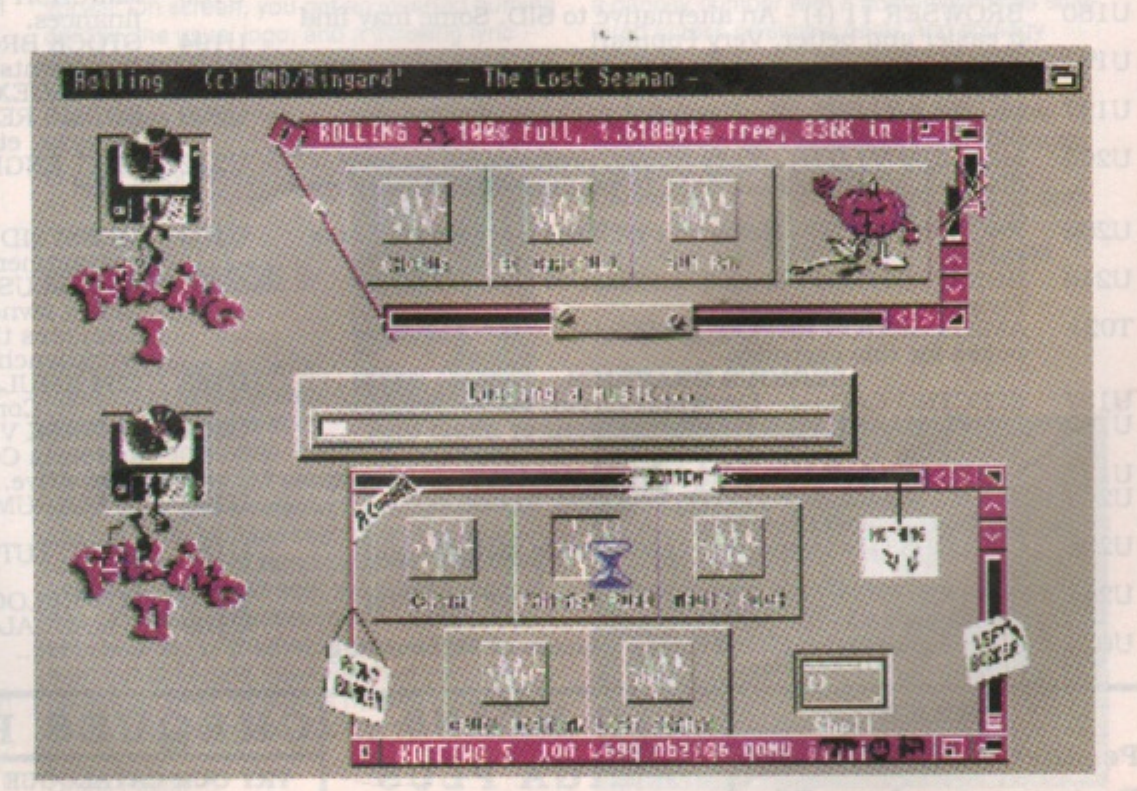
SOUNDS OF SCIENCE

17 Bit No. 1935a & 1935b

Dual Crew show they can turn their hands to both standard intro tunes and dancefloor slammers. First up is a track called Pandora's Box (nothing to do with the OMD record), which gets things moving along in a kind of techno/disco/hi-nrj style. Just as it's building up into something tasty, the soundtrack is brought right back to earth with another of those wince-worthy lead synth samples.

Selecting a new tune from a rotating rubix cube, you could be lucky enough to pick one of the better rave tracks. Then again, you may unwittingly choose one of the hackneyed tracks that could have come off a demo written three or four years ago. Well worth a look all the same, just for the decent tracks.

Crank Factor: 7

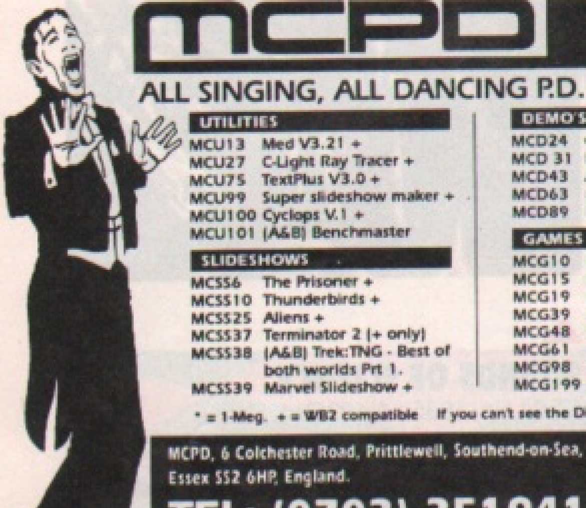


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G061	STAR-TREK (3D)	U071	GAMES MUSIC CREATOR (P)	A032	BLOOD SPORT II
G080	XENON III (P)	U075	HARDWARE KNOW-HOW	A041	REAL THING BIRD
G085	ROGUES TROOPER	U116	TEXT ENGINES (P)	A044	ANTI LEMMING (2D
G102	PIPE-LINES (P)	U144	AMIGA FOX DTP (P)	A072	LIFE'S A BITCH (P)
G190	SKATE-TRIBE (P)	U169	C-MANUAL (4D) (P)	A110	ANOTHER WORLD
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G308	LEMMINGOIDS (P)	U284	COPY & CRACKS TOOL	A231	ALIENS II SS (P)
G309	E-TYPE (P)	U300	MESSY SID II (P)		

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D045	ALCATRAZ (3D) (P)	M021	LAURAL & HARDY (2D)	E004	LEARN & PLAY 1
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MUSIC DEMOS



MANIC RAVES

17 Bit No. 1229



This ageing two-disker from Endless Piracy is still up there with the best of them. Accompanied by a menacing piccy of Bart Simpson and his catapult, the sonic assualt lets rip with a rendition of an old 808 State instrumental, the name of which eludes me, but you'd know it if you heard it.

After the brief intro, the ultimate acid anthem comes spilling out of the speakers like a turbo-charged JCB: Stakker's Humanoid. A very tasty version it is, too, with plenty of beef in the bottom end, bringing up the buzzy sub-bass in chest-imploding style. The rest of the tracks keep the adrenalin going, continuing the acidic theme, occasionally crossing over into Italio house territory. A true classic.

Crank Factor: 10



FUSION

NBS No. M450

From the sampler of MC Matrix comes this set of four rave tunes. First up is a slightly untidy mix of some great samples. The gloss is taken off the pounding breaks and techno effects by some sloppy looping. Next comes another good stomper, with a hefty chugging beat, just marred slightly by some grainy samples. Track three is sadly too distorted to listen to for long, but the quality picks up in all departments for the final acid organ thumper.

Crank Factor: 7 1/2

BACH PRELUDE

NBS No. M453

Is this a first? Demos have traditionally come from all over Europe, and even occasionally the US, but Japan?

Rather low-tech this one. Just a straight sample (albiet a very long one) of classical Bach, played over a plain CLI screen. The sound quality isn't too hot, but at least you're getting the real instruments playing the music, rather than four channels of Amiga samples. However, the novelty of hearing your computer play a sample has long since past, which makes this all rather unimpressive.

Crank Factor: 5

GOSPEL KARAOKE

17 Bit No. 2064

A strange one this: a kind of rock gospel song, sampled complete with a verse and chorus of vocals. On screen, you get an inverted burning crucifix, the usual logo, and a scrolling lyric sheet, complete with bouncing ball. I don't know quite what to make of this. Give it a whirl if you fancy something sompletely different.

Crank Factor: 4

DEPECHE MODE ▶

17 Bit No. 926

A fair rendetion of a short interlude from the Violator album gets this one from Symbiosis underway. The Depeche Mode theme continues to the core of the demo, which gives you a selection of five tracks to choose from. All have been re-written with familiar instrument samples, rather than being made up of samples from the original records. The result is a collection of fairly tame tunes. If you know the original records, you'll get more from this collection, but even then you won't be bowled over, as there's nothing particularly new or interesting about any of the tracks.

Crank Factor: 5

JIGGLE IT

17 Bit No. 2180

The familiar CD player screen fronts this sample-packed offering from Palace. Track one is a dancey number with a good few vocals scattered across its simple beats and squidgy basslines. Both sound quality and composition are excellent, with no jumpy drum loops or carelessly placed drop-ins to break up the flow. Moving on, the uptempo beat continues, marred only by a twee tune over the top. Unfortunately, as you work through the tracks, the quality tails off, ending up as merely mediocre. Still, the graphics are quite nice whichever tune you play.

Crank Factor: 7

CONTACTS

17 Bit Software, 1st Floor Offices, 2/8 Market Street, Wakefield, WF1 1DH. Tel: 0924 366982

NBS, 1 Chain Lane, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5QA. Tel: 0983 529 594

MAKING MUSIC

If you've always wanted to exploit the sound capabilities of your Amiga, but don't know how, Amiga Guide is here to help you get started.



Med 3.2 is regarded as one of the best music packages on the Amiga.

IN the beginning, the world of computerised music was a closed club. If you wanted to write music for a game or demo, not only were you required to compose the tune, but you also had to program your own composition and player programs. If you weren't a cross between Einstein and Beethoven, you didn't stand a chance. Then one day, a bunch of programmers came up with a utility called *Soundtracker*, a simple 4-channel sample sequencer. From this small acorn, a whole forest has gradually appeared, and it's showing no signs of abating. Let's take a stroll through the woods, and we'll unearth the secrets of the effects commands, unravel the mystery of the spectrum analyser, and maybe find out what the hell all of this has got to do with trees.

WHAT IS A TRACKER ANYWAY?

If to you, *Soundtrackers* are just one of those things you ignore because they look about as interesting as a copy of Which Radiator?, then let me enlighten you. Behind that drab front screen lurks a beast of a program – a monster that can elevate you to undiscovered plains, blow your speakers, drive your neighbours insane, and not least, impress your granny!

The best thing about the tracker, is that you can be completely ignorant of traditional music notation, and still crank out some kickin' tunes. All trackers work in much the same way, with the Amiga keyboard emulating a synth or piano keyboard. Notes are entered via the keyboard, and recorded as alpha-numeric codes, eg. 'C-3 1204', in which C is the note, 3 is the third octave, 1 is the number of the instrument on which the note will be played, 2 is an effect (such as vibrato), and 04 is the degree of the effect. These codes are stacked in columns, usually 64 lines high, with a column for each channel. When it comes to playing the tune, the columns scroll up the screen, triggering the right notes as they pass through the central position, usually marked with a horizontal bar.

Once it became clear that *Soundtracker* was going to be a success, the original programmers began releasing updated versions. Strangely enough though, third party programmers also took an interest, and a flow of official and unofficial updates began to gather steam, and new revisions are still coming just as thick and fast as they ever were. Because there are so many variants of the program in the public domain, all free of course, *Soundtracker* is unique among PD programs in having virtually no commercial competition. That's all very well, but with so many on offer, which do you choose? Bring forth the CU Amiga tracker chart.

MED 3.2

Standing proud at the top spot is the latest, and possibly last, version of the original 4-channel *MED*. *MED* (Music Editor) is one of the more extensively re-written tracker clones.

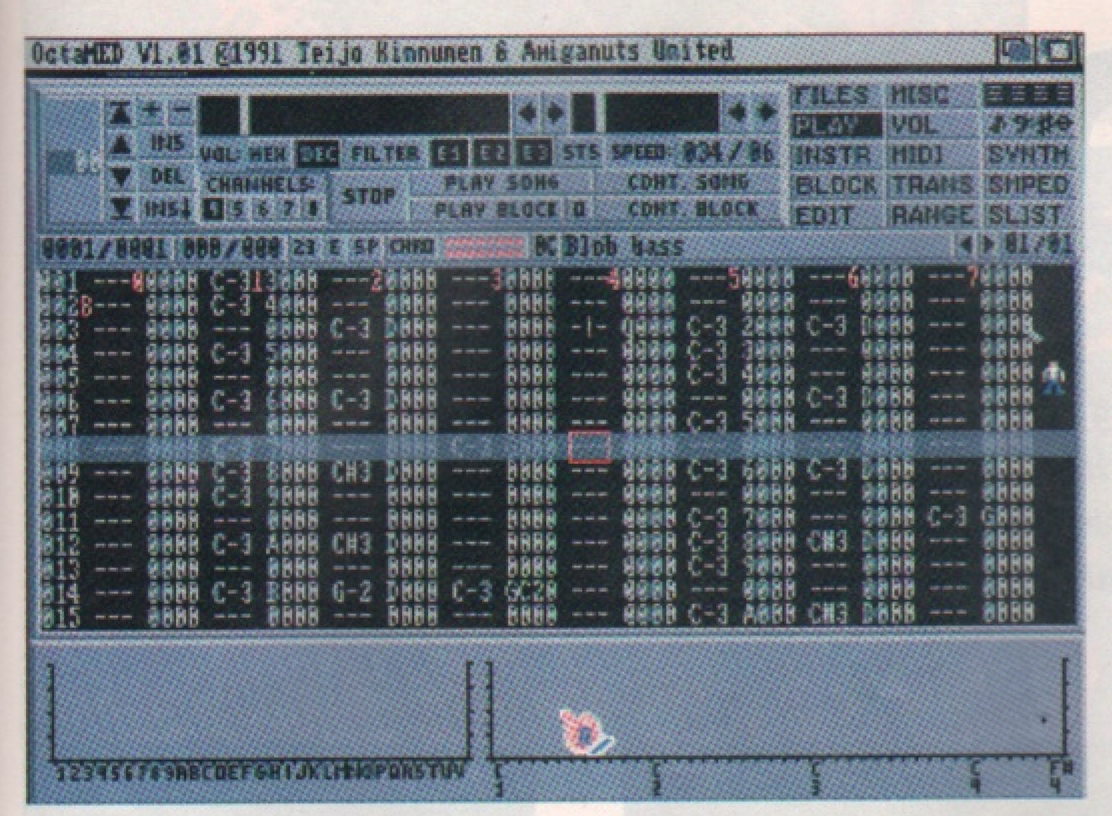
For anyone used to the standard tracker environment, the re-styled front end is the first thing you'll notice. Unlike most trackers, *MED* gives you some indication that your mouse clicks aren't going unheard, most of the time, by flashing its icons as you select them. Though why it only chooses to do this on some and not others, I can't understand. Clicking around the various menu icons, you're presented with a bewildering selection of options. While at first this is a bit off-putting, after a while it becomes quite fun, exploring the darkest recesses of the program, trying to find out what all those long-forgotten features actually do.

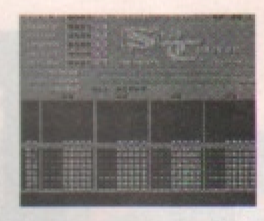
One simple but extremely useful improvement over the traditional tracker program, is the tempo control. Rather than the very coarse adjustments possible with most trackers, with MED you can use BPMs (beats per minute), which are far more accurate - almost essential if you're trying to sequence drum loops.

The sampler and sample editor are the best I've found on any tracker. Grabbing a sound is simple, and once you've got your sample, there are plenty of options to help you spruce it up. One of the best editing features is the BOOST option, which brings up the treble in the sample. Use it well and your samples will take on a previously unheard clarity. Alternatively, you can filter out the high frequencies (handy for fuzzy bass sounds), or even add echoes.

If you've got a MIDI keyboard or drum machine, you can easily run them alongside Amiga samples. Although you can only use four channels of samples, you can enlarge each block to 16 tracks, which leaves 12 tracks for MIDI data, or a full 16 tracks if you don't use samples at all. *MED* can also load, create and save standard *Soundtracker* files, which can't be bad.

Available from: Amiganuts United, 169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton, SO1 6QX. Memory: 512K





Soundtracker 2.6

Well, we couldn't leave out the original tracker could we? Everything is much as before, but there are two main revisions to the program. Previously you were limited to using rather small samples, but now you can include samples up to 128K long. The way the songs are constructed has also been changed. Now you can sequence single tracks rather than just chaining blocks together. This gives you more freedom, saves memory, and once you've got the hang of it, will save you a fair bit of time copying and pasting repeated tracks.
Available from: Diskovery, 108 The Avenue, Clayton, Bradford, W Yorks. Tel: 0274 880066 Memory: 512K

Protracker 2.0

As the 'tracker' suffix would suggest, this is rather more closely related to *Soundtracker* than *MED*. The 2.0 revision still sports the same style of front end that's been endured (or maybe even enjoyed by some) for many years. Despite its continuing the *Soundtracker* tradition of dying occasionally, or at least pretending to die, *Protracker* comes across pretty well.

Unfortunately, the MIDI features of previous versions have been removed. On the good side, there's an improved tempo controller, which is somewhere in between the BPMs of *MED*, and the old style tracker tempo control. Although not quite as advanced as that of *MED*, the sample editor is developed enough to allow you to grab new sounds while you're in the middle of a composition, without having to revert to a dedicated sample editor program to tidy up the sounds. Song files or modules can be saved out in conventional tracker format, or you can compress them to save on disk space.
Available from: NBS, 1 Chain Lane, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5QA. Tel: 0983 529 594 Compatibility: Not Plus compatible. Memory: 512K

OctaMED V1

So what's *OctaMED* doing down at number three, if the sun truely does shine out of its behind? Well, after a few revisions, it has indeed blossomed into an excellent program, but the current PD version 1 won't find as many fans as either the commercial release or the 4-channel original.

For those unfamiliar with *OctaMED* (where have you been?), it's basically a slightly cut down version of the 4-track program, but now you can use 8 channels of samples. Unfortunately, you pay for the extra channels in a number of ways. One drawback is that you're reduced to the old tracker tempo control. You can no longer set or change the volume of a sample in the sequence (so all samples have to be played at full volume), and the sound quality drops considerably, with the treble becoming muffled and fuzzy. The player routine takes a lot of processor time, too, slowing down anything else you've got running, so it's not much use for games or demos.

One final drawback, if you're into big mixes with loads of samples, is that *OctaMED* reduces the amount of memory available for sample-storage, because of the increased size of the program itself. *MED 3.2* running on a 1 meg Amiga gives you about 350K for your tunes, while OctaMED cuts this by about 100K, even when running in 4-channel mode.

Despite all these criticisms, *OctaMED V1* is still an excellent choice of tracker. The 8-channel support gives you a lot more freedom to develop your tracks, so you can fill them out properly with all those sub-melodies and twiddly bits you didn't have room for with 4 tracks.
Available from: Amiganuts United, 169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton, SO1 6QX. Memory: 1 meg

Voices 8

Voices 8 was one of the first trackers to offer 8-channel sound. Unfortunately, I never got hold of any instructions for it, if there were any, but it's pretty straightforward if you've used any other tracker. All eight tracks are displayed at once, using almost the full height of the PAL screen for the track data, rather than the usual letterbox-shape window. Presentation is not the best, but it's refreshingly easy to move around the program. There's also a useful sample editor that looks a bit tatty these days, but works well all the same.

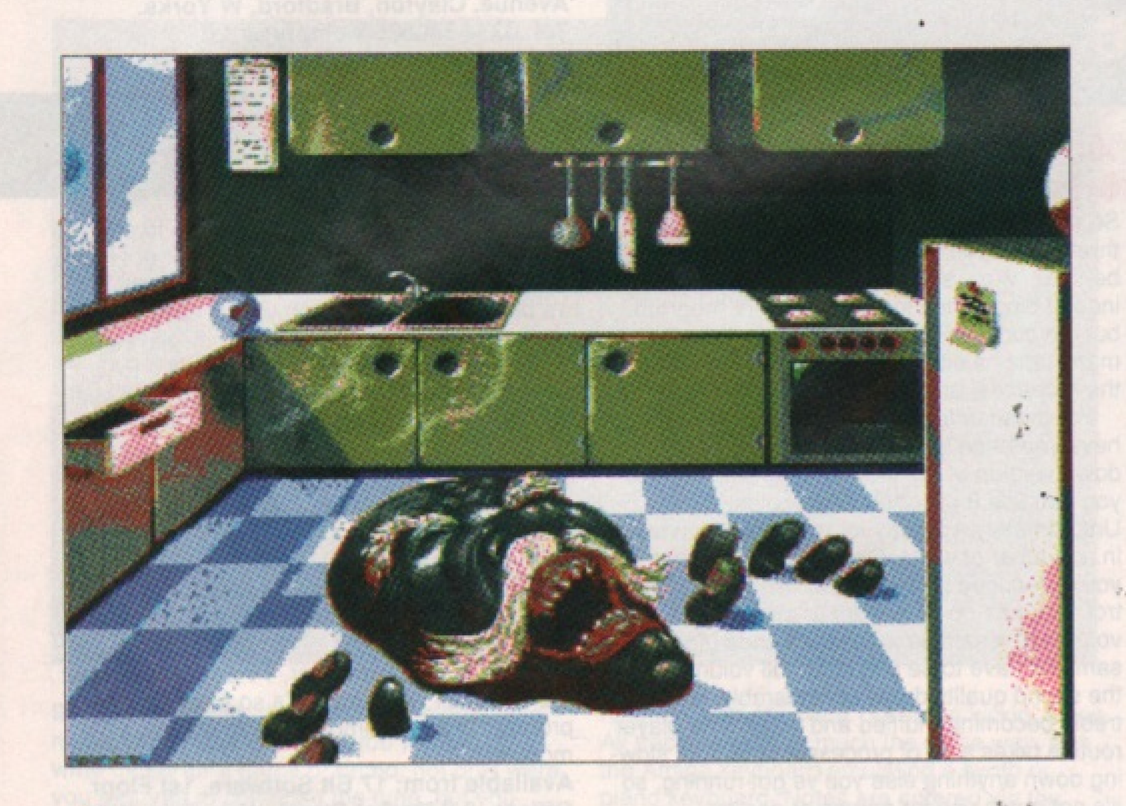
The drawbacks of *OctaMED V1* also apply here, and as it's not a widely used program, you're not going to get the compatibility of the more popular trackers. Still, it's a lot of fun just used on its own. However, TV users take note: the text is all very small. It's so small that the program is almost impossible to use via a TV modulator.
Available from: 17 Bit Software, 1st Floor Offices, 2/8 Market Street, Wakefield, WF1 1DH. Tel: 0924 366982 Memory required:

AND THE REST

The family of tracker clones is growing all the time – there are plenty more where that lot came from. *Noisetracker*, *Startrekker*, *Bananatracker* and co. are mostly little different from each other, apart from the logo you get when you boot up. Each have their own little quirks, and it's really up to you to pick out your own personal fave. For example, I personally can't stand the way most *Soundtracker* permutations like disks to be called 'ST-XX'. That reason alone is enough to keep me plugging away with *MED*, but for every *MED* user, there are probably three or four Soundtracker users. Picking out the one that suits you, is made a fair bit easier by PD libraries that supply tracker compilation disks. Get hold of one of these, plus a disk of samples, and you'll never look back.

PD DEMOS

Creative, odd, interesting, watchable or listenable, demos come in all shapes and forms. Here, in no particular order, are some which have grabbed our attention.



IN THE KITCHEN
Produced by Anarchy, this demo breathes new life into plenty of haggard themes. There are some fantastic vector effects, bitmapped bobs and madlebrots, along with some excellent music. There's also a notable absence of scroll-text through most of the demo, which is very welcome indeed. Other demo groups please take note! (17-Bit, 2665)

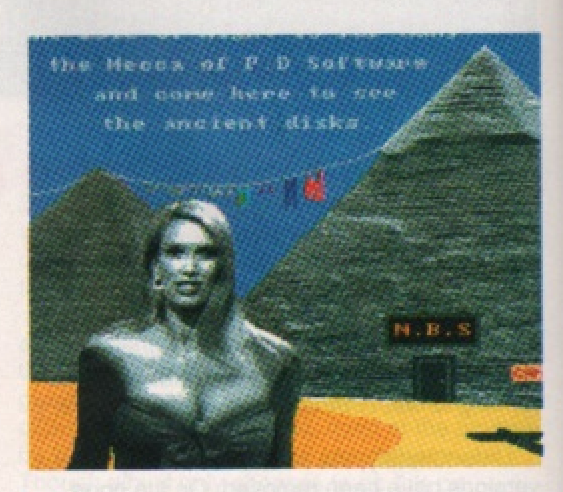
SILENCE OF THE LAMBS
This is peculiar because it's a demo based on a film which doesn't rely on digitised images. Instead, there are some well-drawn pictures and atmospheric music which convey the story very well. It's a pity the whole thing couldn't have been longer though. (NBS, Disk code: D764)

EVOLUTION
This is a real mixed bag. It contains static pictures, scrolling starfields and psychedelic happenings. Naturally, all this comes with suitable music and just about every trick ever employed in a demo. (17-Bit, Disk code: 1773)

INTENSE
Mock stereo systems are fairly common on the PD circuit, and this is one of the better ones. As well as featuring some smart music and different animations for each track, you can also cue through the music, alter the volume and adjust the balance. (17-Bit, Disk code: 2004)

DIGITAL
This demo, from Anarchy, cuts no corners. It features all the tunes, scrollies and vectors you'd find in most other megademos, but this one clocks in at a staggering 26 minutes! And the surprising thing is that it rarely gets boring. Top class. (17-Bit, Disk code: 2016)

THE SECRET POLICEMAN'S BALL
Guaranteed to get you giggling is this sample taken from the 1979 Ball at the Albert Hall. It features half of Monty Python and Rowan Atkinson trying to outdo each other with stories of their hard up-bringing. 'I used to live in cardboard box in middle of street' type stuff. (Diskcovery, Disk code: M230)



MAGGIE 2: PANCAKE DAY
If you have a taste for the weird, you should take a look at this disk. It's a collection of images snatched from TV then cut out and dropped into humorous situations. There's some interesting, bizarre and very occasionally funny stuff here. (NBS, Disk code: S585)

ALIEN WIDESCREEN
Digitising pictures from movies is nothing new, but this offering takes the best images from the widescreen version of Alien and places enough of them together so that you can follow the story. Also in this collection is the Elephant Man and John Carpenter's The Thing.
(Alternative PD, Disk code: AlienWide)

WILDFIRE MEGADEMO
Combining some excellent, not to mention original, acidy-type music and animation, this is one of the best megademos of the last year. Sit back and try to figure out where many of the samples come from, there are certainly lots of 'em.
(PD Soft, Disk code: 2137)

BLINDATE
You've probably seen the show, now you can take part in the PD counterpart. As one of the three lucky (or unlucky) female contestants, you get to answer the questions thrown at you by Mr X, the lonley guy in the hotseat. Interesting, to say the least. (PD Soft)



As the music pumps out the sounds are accompanied with an ever-shifting screen of shapes and images.



BUDBRAIN MEGADEMO
Although this demo is getting on a bit now, it's still one of the best ever. In true megademo style it features plenty of different graphic sections, tunes, scrolly messages and humour.
(17-Bit, Disk code: Budbrain Megademo)

ALCATRAZ MUSEUM
Digitised artwork is all too common nowadays, so it's nice to see a disk such as this which contains entirely computer-renedered images. The quality is excellent. (17-Bit, Disk code: 1995)

CRY FOR DAWN
American modern art comes to the Amiga in the form of this slideshow digitised from Cry For Dawn, an obscure American horror mag. The quality of the digitising is very good, as is the sampling of the accompanying effects. (17-Bit, Disk code: 2030)



WILDFIRE
Featuring samples from KLF tracks amongst others, Wildfire is a top-notch rave disk. The music's good and there are plenty of wild images to make your eyes bleed. (Diskovery, Disk code: Wildfire)

DOCTOR WHO
One for fans of the series. This disk contains 16 pictures from the story The Invisible Enemy (which starred Tom Baker) complete with an appearance from K9. It's a pity about the abysmal accompanying tune though.
(17-Bit, Disk code: 1788)

RED DWARF
This disk features Lister, Rimmer, Cat and Kryton starring in digitised versions of some classic Red Dwarf sketches. Not only are there pictures, but sampled sound too. A must for fans. (Diskovery, Disk code: Red Dwarf)

LOVE SEX INTELLIGENCE
A-comin on like a seventh sense. This disk features a remix of the Shamen's LSI, complete with the C-man's pointy-fingered dancing and arhythmic rapping.
(17-Bit, Disk code: 2062)

LIQUID REFLEX
At first this seems like nothing out of the ordinary, but it soon opens up into a very interesting and technically impressive graphics feast. The bulk of the demo is made up from filled vector sequences, and while not complicated, the scenes display plenty of originality. (17-Bit, Disk code: 2223)

STAR TREK – The Best Of Both Worlds
In a similar vein to the Red Dwarf demo, this one features digitised sound and pictures from the climatic story of series three of The Next Generation. It comes in two parts, each two disks long. If you haven't seen the program, avoid the cliff-hanger by buying both parts.
(NBS, Disk code: S566)



Here's one for Doctor Who fanatics – even if it was a pile of rubbish they'd still by it. Sad.



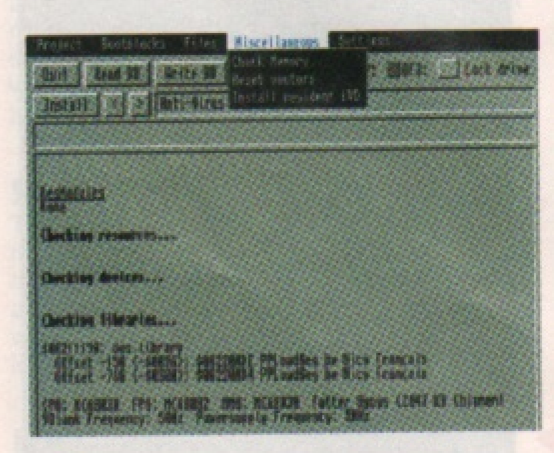
PD UTILITIES

You don't have to spend a fortune to get your hands on some amazing utilities. The Public Domain offers a wealth of great programs that are often better than their commercial counter-parts. So, whether it's a graphics package you're after, or a disk copier, we guide you through the best releases.

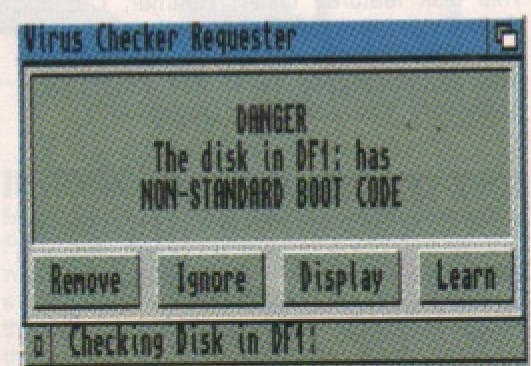
THE Amiga has a vibrant and healthy Public Domain software market, and nowhere is this more evident than when it comes to utilities. Whatever your interest from video production to wordprocessing, programming to knitting, there is at least one free program to help you. With such a diverse selection of programs to choose from, it's not always easy finding the right one. But don't worry – Amiga Guide is here to guide you through some of the more useful programs.

VIRUS KILLERS

Regardless of your interest in the Amiga, a virus killer is virtually essential. Why? Well it doesn't matter what programs you're loading, they're all susceptible to infection, and with over two hundred different 'strains' competing for the right to trash your valuable programs and data, you'd be very unwise to ignore the danger. These viruses range in destructiveness from the computer equivalent of a blocked-up nose and a sore throat, to something as lethal as meningitis or a heart attack. I don't mean to make light of these diseases, it's just that some computer viruses can be just as terminal to your (possibly priceless) data.



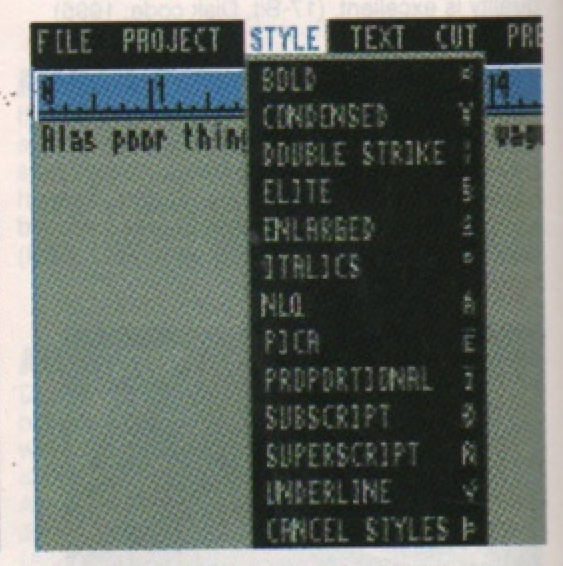
There are nearly as many killers as there are viruses, and choosing one can be difficult. However, *Boot-X* and *Virus Checker* are two of the most popular, and should cater for most requirements. *Boot-X* is perhaps the more comprehensive of the two packages, providing options to search for all major virus types including boot, file, validator and track varieties. It also lets you install anti-virus programs both in your computer's memory and on the boot block of your disks. It even allows you to record a log of your virus checking activities to ensure that you know exactly what's happening at all times. The greatest advantage that this program has is its ability to load 'Brain files'. These files contain information about the latest viruses, and non-standard boot-blocks, and can be loaded regardless of the program version that you're using. New brain files are created regularly, so all you need do to ensure that your checker is up to date, is order the latest file from your local PD library.



Virus Checker is almost as comprehensive as *Boot-X* although it cannot check for track viruses. It's considerably easier to use than the former package, with most checking operations being performed automatically whenever a disk is inserted into any drive.The best way to keep abreast of the virus threat is via the Virus Research Group, a world anti-virus organisation co-ordinated from Britain and Scandinavia. This group constantly gathers information about new viruses and develops killers to deal with them. Once a month they produce an updated disk full of virus killers called 'The New Superkillers'. This disk is chocfull of virus protection and disk repair software including the above-mentioned *Boot-X* and *Virus Checker*. (Disk code: New Superkillers. From: Goldstar Computers)

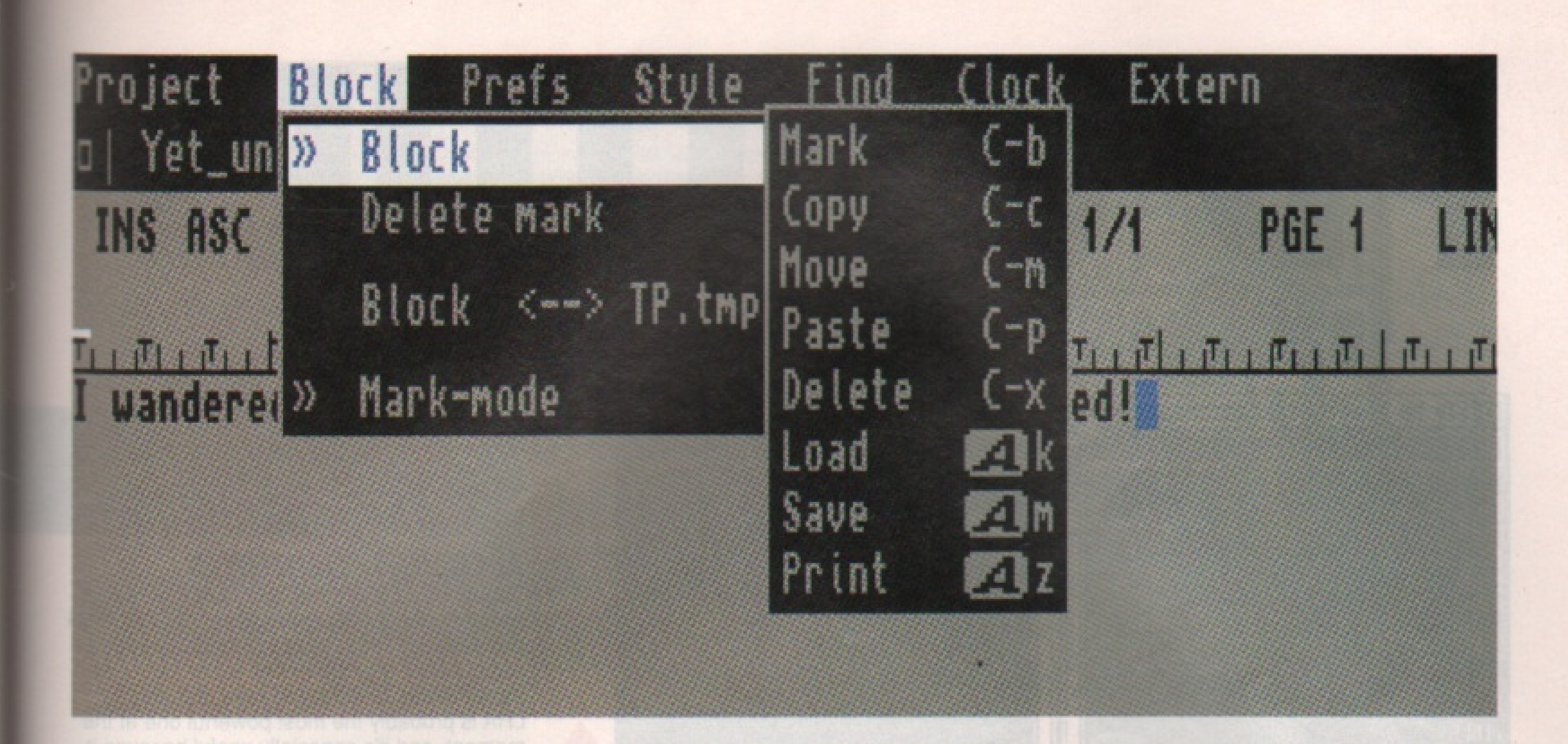
WORD PROCESSOR

Sooner or later, most Amiga users buy or acquire a word processor (WP) of some description. Whilst there are obviously many worthwhile commercial offerings, there are also a few PD ones that are equal or better than most of the full-price stuff. There are currently two WPs fighting for supremacy: *Text Plus* and *Text Engine*, both of which are first class and have more than enough features to satisfy most needs.

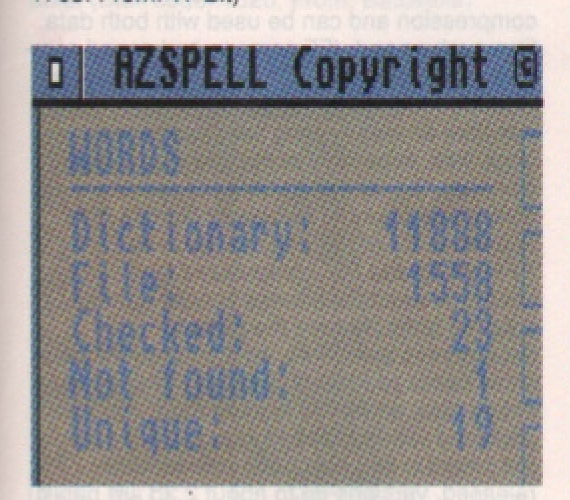


Text Engine has been designed with simplicity and user-friendliness first, but in many ways it feels more like a text editor than a word processor. It has a pleasing Workbench 2.0 look, even on 1.2/1.3 machines, and it's extremely easy to use. Whilst its menus are not over-flowing with options, it has a conciseness to it that makes it very appealing. Unfortunately, it doesn't seem to include variable justification, but it does include basic word wrap facilities.

It also offers support for a huge variety of type styles and sizes including sub- and superscript, proportional, enlarged and Pica. Despite its friendliness, I feel that it is rather crippled by its lack of mouse controlled movement and editing functions. (Disk code: 2129. From: 17 Bit Software)

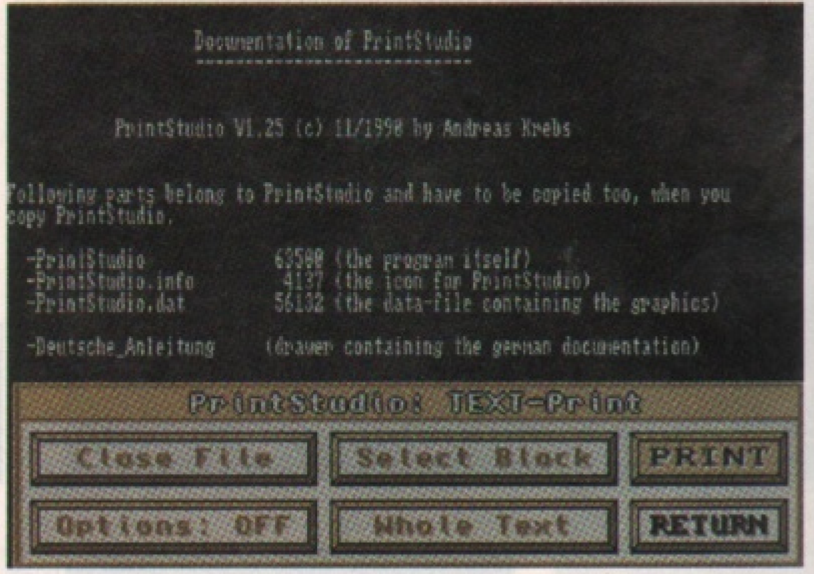


Text Plus also simulates the 2.0 look, in colour scheme at least. It also seems to contain all of the features that *Text Engine* doesn't; it even supports multi-coloured text. It includes comprehensive block marking and editing facilities, not to mention search and replace and even direct hotlink access to *SID, Powerpacker* and *File Master*. Because the program's author has apparently not received a worthwhile shareware contribution from users, the latest version of the program includes a very effective 'conscience prodder' called the 'nerve-racking requester'. This requester appears almost constantly to remind you to register your version. Needless to say, the registered version does not include this irritating feature. (Disk code: 1703. From: 17 Bit)



SPELL CHECKERS

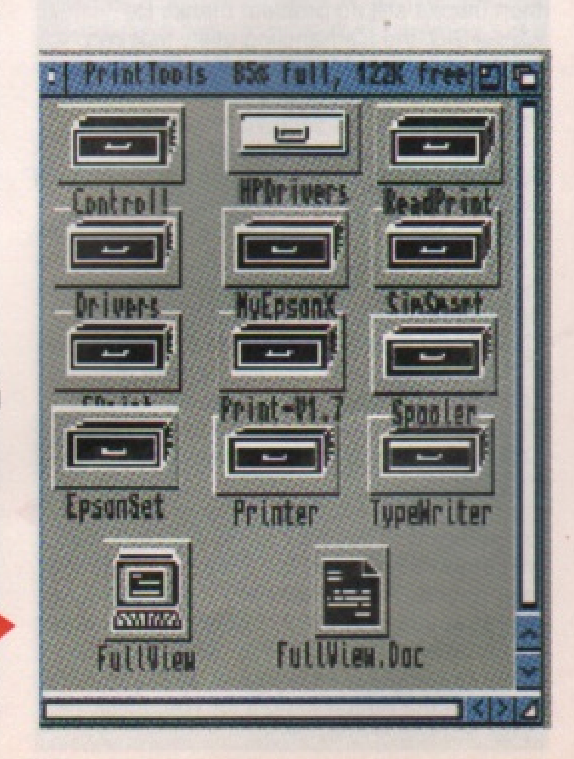
Of course, once you have a word processor, a spell checker will ensure that you don't make any stupid or embarrassing spelling mistakes. Both of the above programs are supplied with a spell checker: *Amiga Spell* in the case of *Text Plus*, and *AZSpell* for *Text Engine*. If you want something more than just a spell checker, *Word Power* is an excellent program. In addition to checking your spelling, it can also solve anagrams, give you the Scrabble score for any word and even analyse the average word length of a document. (Disk code: PU172 From: Blitterchips)



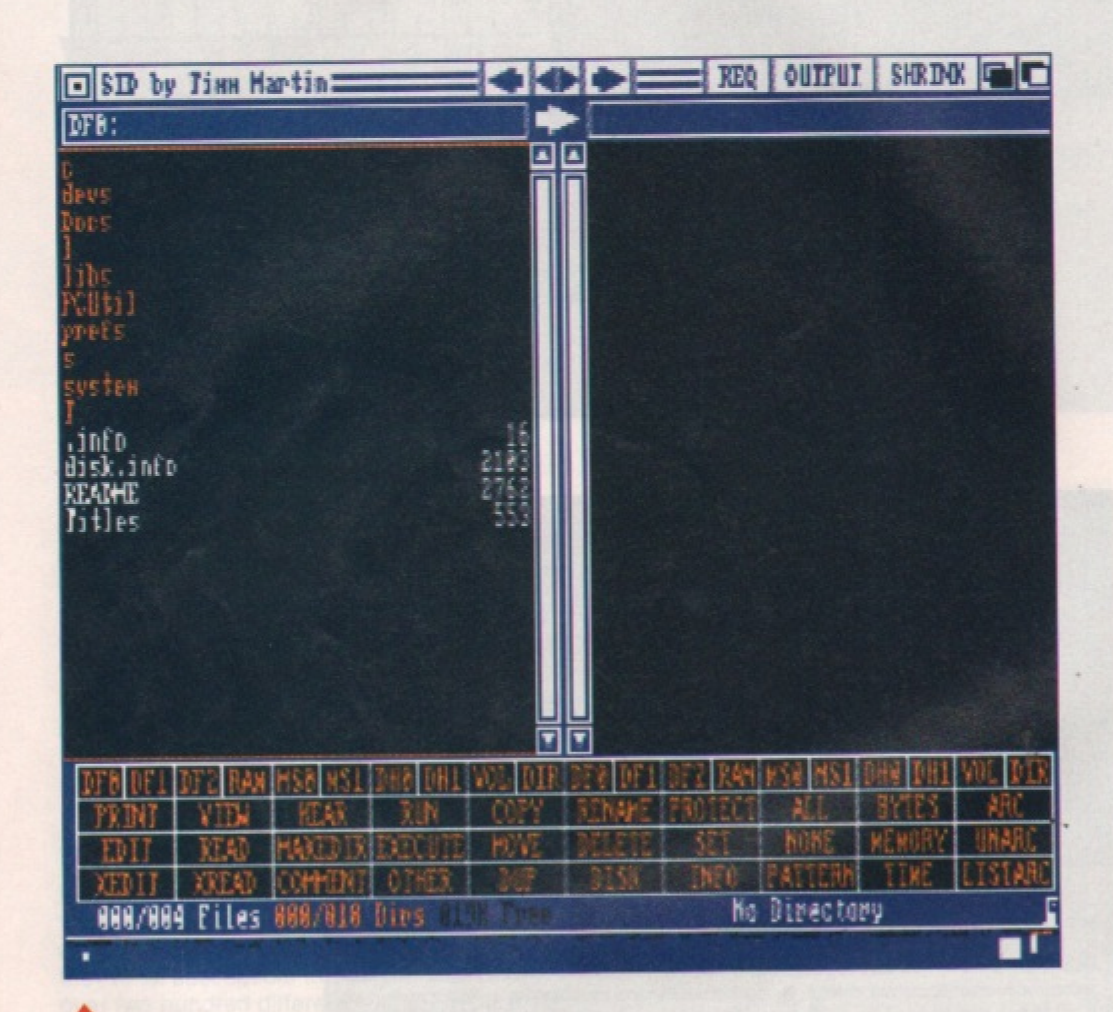
PRINT PROGRAMS

Once you've completed your literary masterpiece, it's not much good unless you can print it out. Of course, most word processors include their own print routines but for really precise control of your specific printer, there are a couple of programs available. The most powerful of these is called *Print Studio*, and it can handle both text and graphics. As far as text printing goes, it gives facilities to print text in a variety of formats, letting you specify headlines, line and page numbering, etc. It also lets you decide whether or not you wish to print an entire document or just portions of it. As for graphics handling, again it offers you the chance to print all or just part of a screen. If you just select a part, it will be enlarged to fill your paper. (Disk code: U683. From: NBS)

Staying with the subject of printing, 17 Bit's Print Disk contains a selection of small print utilities and printer drivers which between them can make life easier. For example, *Spooler* lets you create a buffer into which all printing is sent before it goes to the printer. This means that you can get on with using your computer again almost immediately, whilst the printer gradually reads the contents of the buffer in its own time. (Disk code: 1612. From: 17 Bit Software)



PD UTILITIES



FILE UTILITIES

If you don't have access to a printer yourself, you could always give your text files to someone who does. If they happen to own a PC, then there's still no problem thanks to *MessySID*, the file handling utility that can read and write to MSDOS disks. Based upon the ever-popular file handler *SID*, *MessySID* provides you with a wide variety of mouse-controlled file handling options, thus saving you from having to type them in via the CLI. Of course, you can copy, delete, move and edit files, but the real strength of the program is in the way that you can assign your favourite utilities to it so that they will be used instead of its defaults. For example, if you're a big fan of *Cygnus Ed*, use that instead of the default text editor. The program can also display IFF screens and play samples. Needless to say, these features may be used with both Amiga and MSDOS format disks. (Disk code: U619. From: NBS)

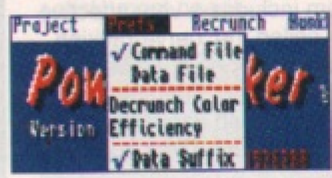
For Amiga use only, *SID 2* is even more powerful still. It includes all the features that made *SID* so popular, but it also provides with user-definable buttons to which you can assign any function. Want a button that plays an OctaMed tune, or a *DPaint* animation? Need to load a spreadsheet or an archiver? Just define a button to do it for you. (Disk code: PU192. From: NBS)

Probably the most amazing file handler ever published!

Disk archivers are ideal for compressing files.

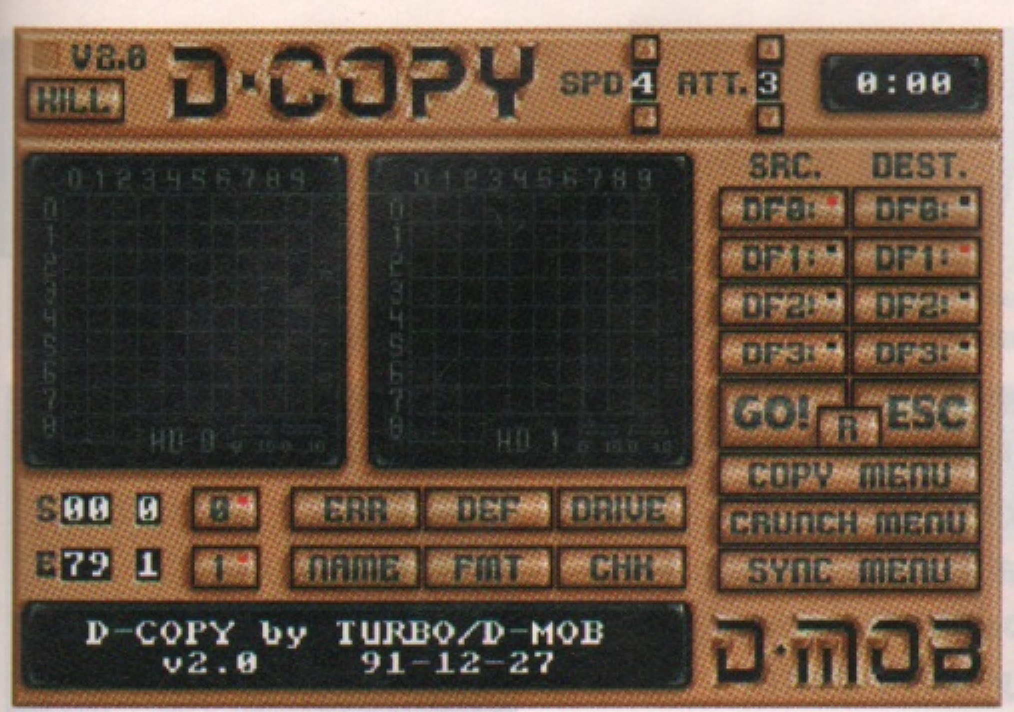
ARCHIVERS/CRUNCHERS

Talking about archivers, there are a variety of popular ones available including *Zip*, *Zoo*, *LHA* and *LHArca*. These handy utilities are ideal for compressing a group of files either for modem transmission, or simply to save disk space. LHA is probably the most powerful one at the moment, and it's especially useful because it can de-archive files created with a number of other archivers. Basically, it can be used to compress and store anything from a single file to the entire contents of an AmigaDOS disk. These file are then linked into a single file known as an archive. You can specify the compression level to be used, as well as the way the data is to be stored. If used on directories, it can also retain the directory structure so that when the archive is decompressed, the original structure is still retained. (Disk code: V585. From: PD Soft)

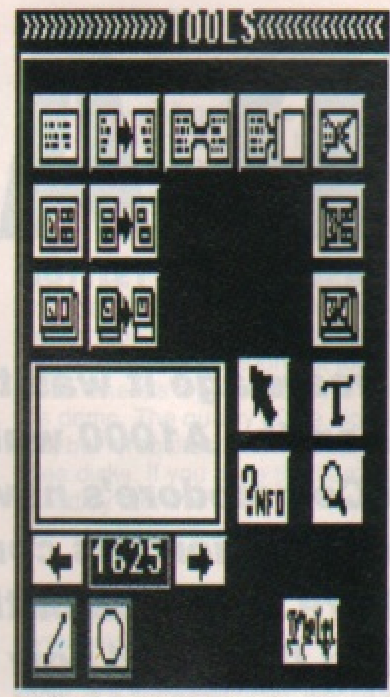


For single file compression, they don't come much better than *Powerpacker*. It supports five levels of compression and can be used with both data files such as text, IFF screens and sound samples and executable files such as *DPaint*, *OctaMed*, etc. On an unaccelerated Amiga it can take an awfully long time to compress large files, especially at maximum compression rate, but compression (and consequently disk space savings) can be as high as 60% and more. By using 'patches' such as PPloadseg and PP, compressed files can be loaded in exactly the same way as uncompressed ones (without the need to decompress them first), so if you have a slide-show demo you can fit twice as many screens onto a disk, whilst still loading them into your preferred viewer/display program. Although the program has now been commercially released, versions up to about 2.3b are public domain. (Disk code:1135. From: Battleaxe PD)

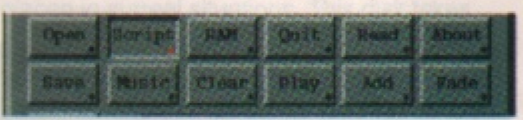
I can't finish this subject without briefly mentioning DMS, a whole disk archiver that is ideal for modem use. If you want to send somebody a disk by modem without them having to reconstruct it file by file when they receive it, this is the ideal solution. It has two simple commands: Read and Write. Just tell it the disk to compress and it will crunch the whole thing into one optimised file in well under two minutes. The recipient of the file needs simply to insert a blank disk into their internal drive and the file will be expanded back onto the disk in its original format. What could be easier? (Disk code: V800. From: PDSoft)



Make handy back-ups of your original programs with this comprehensive disk copier.



If you fancy dabbling with DTP, get *Page Creator*.



Create your own slideshows with *Slideshow Generator*.

COMMS PACKAGES

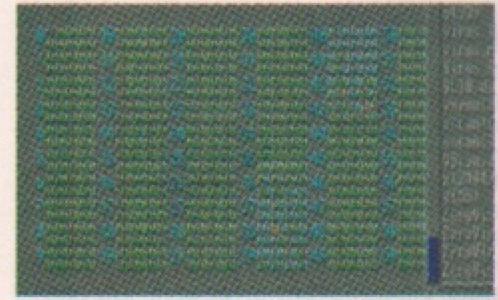
The primary use for archivers is to compress files so that modem transmission times will be reduced and also so that you don't have to mess about sending dozens of individual files. When it comes to modem communication, there are few better packages than *NComm*. Naturally it gives you full control over the parity and protocol settings of your modem, supporting baud rates up to 115, 200 and protocols as specialised as Kermit and Compuserve. It also includes a phone book function so that you can store your frequently used numbers to be recalled and dialled at the click of a button. Each number can be assigned to a specific set of keyboard macros so that when you dial a particular bulletin board, for example, only keyboard short-cuts relative to it become available. (Disk code: 1026. From: Battleaxe)

Comms packages open up a whole new electronic world.

COPIERS AND DRIVE TOOLS

Changing the subject completely, most users require a copier at some stage, and although the Workbench 'Duplicate' command is OK, it's neither very powerful or user-friendly. For this reason, a number of PD copying programs have been developed. *D-Copy* is one of the nicer ones, and far more attractive than the commercial *X-Copy* program. It supports copying between up to four drives and has a variety of copying modes including no less than three nibble (deep) copy types. It also provides verification of all DOS mode copies. (Disk code: PU37. From: Blitterchips)

Mind you, it doesn't matter how good your copier is, sooner or later you're going to encounter a damaged disk. Although *D-Copy* tries to intelligently repair any damage it encounters, for a more thorough job you'll need a dedicated program. *Last Hope* is ideal for those occasions when you accidentally delete a file that you meant to keep. It will automatically scan any AmigaDOS standard



Last Hope – let's hope you don't have to use it much.

file system disk highlighting all possible deleted files. To restore them simply click on the file name required, click OK and bingo! One file brought back from the dead. Disk code: PU138. From: NBS. If you encounter a disk that starts giving you inexplicable read/write errors, it could be that it has been corrupted or has simply worn out. If this is the case, you'll need a program such as *Disk Salve* which will go right through a damaged disk repairing files and restoring the DOS structure as much as possible. When it's done its job, you should then copy the restored files to another disk for safe keeping. (Disk code: F251. From: Blitterchips)

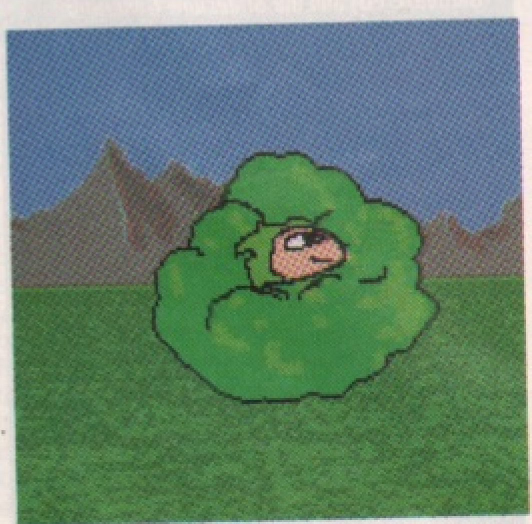
BEST OF THE REST

Well, we're nearly at the end of this utility round up, but before I go, I must just give an honourable mention to a few more programs. If you're interested in creating your own slideshows you should check out the *Slideshow Construction Set* (Disk code: 1140. From: Battleaxe PD) and the *Slideshow Generator* (Disk code: PU1199. From: Blitterchips) Both programs can handle any IFF screen formats, and give you the chance to create slick demos complete with a variety of fades and wipes. If you're more concerned with the inner workings of your Amiga you should take a close look at *SnoopDOS* and *Amiga Real-Time Monitor* (ARTM). *SnoopDOS* (Disk code: F451. From: Valley PD) allows you to see the exact steps and library calls involved in loading any DOS program, and it's an ideal diagnostic tool when a disk won't load. *ARTM* (Disk code: F327. From: Valley PD) lets you check out what's happening inside your Amiga at any moment, including all system calls and the condition of many key registers. It also lets you close any window down or call it to the front. DTP fans may be interested to learn about *Amiga Fox* (Disk code:839. From: Battleaxe.) and *Page Creator* (Disk code: Page Creator. From: 17 Bit), two quick and simple programs that have both undergone recent revision. Modelled on the professional programs, *Page Creator* is the more comprehensive and flexible of the two packages, and looks as if it may become a force to be reckoned with as it evolves.

PD ANIMATION

Seven years ago it was the sight of a ray-traced juggler on the A1000 which helped bring attention to Commodore's new wonder machine. Amiga animation has come a long way since then. Here are some of the best, the people who produced them and how they were done.



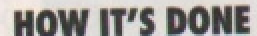


LEADERS OF THE PACK

Very much the man of the moment is Eric Schwartz, an American college student whose work has gone down a storm in Europe. Apart from the quality of his animations, they feature strong characters and are well scripted, which sets them apart from many currently available animations. There's now even a video available from ProDisc which features the best of his work.

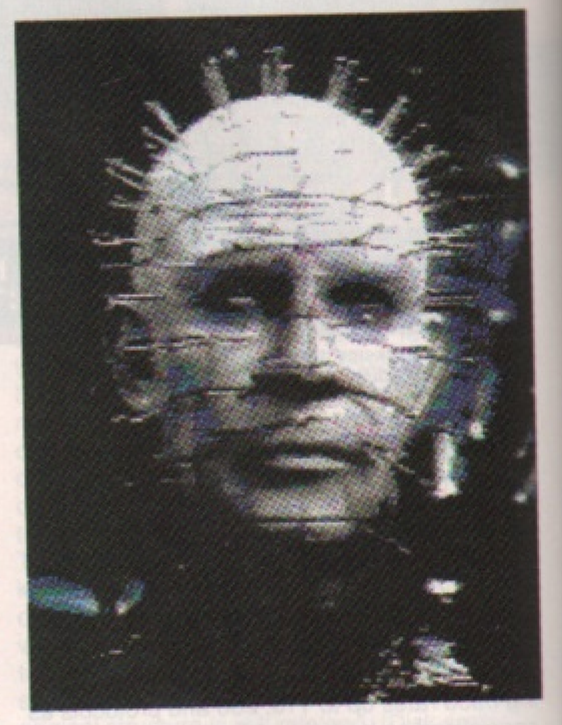
Another star on the animation scene is Tobias Richter. From his base in Germany, he's been supplying a steady stream of ray-traced pictures to the PD network for some years now. On top of these he has also been responsible for creating some breathtaking animations based around Star Trek.

Also gaining recognition is Jim Robinson, whose work includes A Small Station At Khern, a stunning animation which was restricted to 3Mb only until recently. His work concentrates on 3D animations, which are made up from polygons, and take the Amiga to its limit.



HOW IT'S DONE

Most Amiga animators use a variety of packages and techniques, but they all agree a powerful machine is needed. Eric Schwartz, for instance, produces his work on an A2000 with a hard drive and 3Mb of memory. Even then he's restricted as most people don't have that kind of set up, so he has to scale his demos down to work with a minimum of 1Mb. Despite the complexity of his work, Eric uses common packages like *DPaint III* and *IV* to generate the pictures, then *MovieSetter* to put the finished product together with sound.





HELLBOUND – HELLRAISER 2

Gore blimey! Hellraiser chief bad guy, Pinhead, comes to your Amiga in a digitised film sequence showing how he came to be the way he is. Lock your granny out of the room when you play this one. (17-Bit, Disk code: 1948)

MAYHEM ON WHEELS

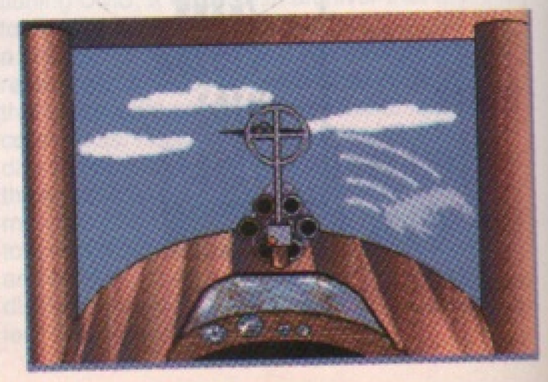
This is an example of Amiga video digitising. There are now several disks in this series, each containing digitised footage from two spectacular motor race crashes. (NBS, Disk code: Mayhem)

UNSPORTING

Another typical piece of Eric Schwartz animation. This time he has a real brute of a fighter plane chasing a small tank across a desert. It culminates with the plane snagging its nose on a dune then spiralling into the ground. Not Eric's best work, but it's still very good. (17-Bit, Disk code: 1950)

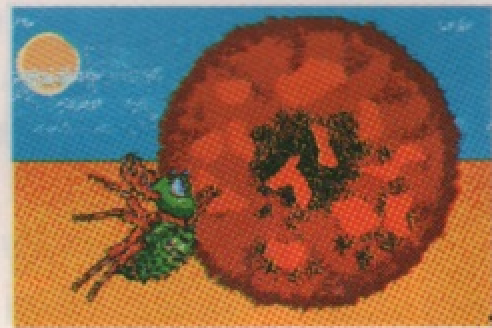














CLASSY ANIMATIONS 1992
Steve Packer is now involved in putting the finishing touches to his first game, but in his spare time he still finds time to chronicle the further adventures of Chuck, cartoon hero of the PD world. This disk contains four Chuck demos and two 'extras'. In one Chuck takes time out from being his usual loveable self to terrorise the backstreets on a motorbike, in a mickey-take of Akira. (NBS, Disk code: H686)

AGATRON ANIMATION 23
Created by Tobias Richter, this totally awesome animation has the USS Enterprise attacking the Reliant. It's fast, smooth and creative. Essential viewing. (NBS, Disk code: PA016)

AMY VS THE WALKER
Remember the Walker demo? This piece of animation had an AT-AT, digitised from The Empire Strikes Back, strolling past an Amiga and blowing everything to hell. This interpretation from Eric Schwartz has the Walker meeting its end at the hands of Amy the Squirrel, star of many of Eric's demos. (PD Soft)

ALIEN BREED
Team-17 commissioned Tobias Richter to produce an animation based on their *Alien Breed* game and here it is. As usual it's stunning to look at, and takes at least 1.5Mb to run. (17-Bit)

DUNCAN THE DUNG BEATLE
This animation, by Roddy McMillan, is very much in the style of Eric Schwartz, although Eric has never employed a dung beatle as a star. Duncan is seen doing what he does best, assailing a large lump of animal droppings. It's funny and rather revolting, but a little rough in places. (Virus Free)

MARS FLIGHT
This excellent 3D animation shows a space craft coming in to land at a base on Mars. The striking feature of this demo is the detail applied to objects such as the buildings around the base itself. (Crazy Joes)

SWEET REVENGE
Does the 'beep-beep' of the Road Runner annoy you? It just doesn't seem right that Wile E. Coyote should get the innards stomped/chopped/blown or battered out of him all the time. Well, this demo from Game Over changes all that. Not only is it perfectly in the Loony Tunes style, right down to view points and quality of animation, it also has Wile E getting the bird. If you see what we mean. (NBS 132)

F 15
Another early Tobias Richter animation, this time though its as down to Earth as he gets, with an F-15 swooping in from the sky to land on a runway in the middle of nowhere. (Blitterchips)

JUGGLER 2
Not content with molesting the classic Walker demo, Eric Schwartz has also defiled the ray-traced Amiga Juggler. His version features a female juggler along with the male original, who sidles up to him, winks and causes him to lose his concentration. (17-Bit)

MUTTLEY AND THE BEANSTALK
Heh, heh, heh, it's Muttley, winner of medals and cartoon side-kick of Dick Dastardly, starring in a digitised cartoon put together by Dave Hollis. There's a good side and a bad side to this demo. The quality of the digitising is excellent, but it requires 3Mb to load and comes on three disks. If you have the hardware, and are a Muttley fan, this is a set of disks you must own. (17-Bit)

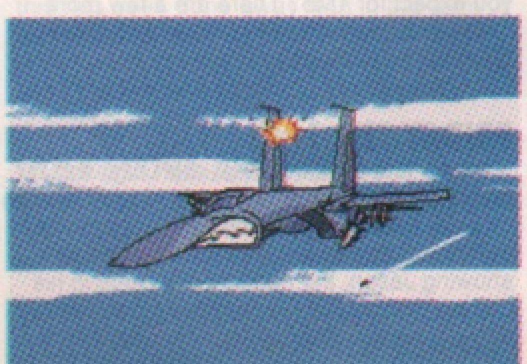
MAGRITTE
If you have a taste for something out of the ordinary, check this out. Magritte, if you didn't know, is a surrealist artist, whose work usually involves devices made out of facial features and bowler-hatted, over-coated businessmen placed in surreal situations. This disk takes some of his more noteable works and animates them, which produces some interesting effects. (PD Soft)

A SMALL STATION AT KHERN
The original version of this fantastic Jim Robinson animation required 2Mb to run. This version, re-worked by Man Machine has had the visuals reduced to 2x3", which means it will run on 1Mb machines. Despite its size, Khern is still a stunning animation. (NBS H6110)

ODYSSEY
Epic is the only word which can be applied to this demo. Taking up five disks, Odyssey features several different types of animation styles and music bolted together to produce a series of stunning scenes which will impress just about anyone. (17-Bit, 1574)

LEMMINGS REVENGE
Earlier in the year we featured an Eric Shwartz demo which had a rather aggressive jet-fighter blowing up innocent Lemmings in a brilliant skit on the Psygnosis puzzler. Not to be outdone, Roddy McMillan has taken this one step further. His Lemmings Revenge animation starts out exactly the same way as Eric's although this time one Lemming survives the carnage, gets into the cock-pit of a biplane and sets out to deal with the jet-plane. All good fun and very well animated. It comes on two disks and you'll need at least two meg to run it. (Virus Free)







PD ANIMATION

THE RUN

This was one of the first animations we saw from Tobias Richter. Although it's very short, the quality is excellent. It shows a Lotus chasing another high-performance car down an American freeway. The best feature is the excellent use of perspective as the cars weave in and out of traffic. (Virus Free)



Colours, by the Devils, offers a multi-coloured fractal landscape that runs at 50 frames a second.



Six years ago people would have said this wasn't possible on the Amiga. How wrong they were.



An early Tobias Richter animation.





ROBIN RELIANT TURBOCHALLENGE

Familiar with the intro sequence to Gremlin's *Lotus Challenge*? If you are you might like this. Instead of a Lotus roaring on in this mickey-take intro, a Robin Reliant putters on. Funny, in a three-wheeled kind of way. The latest update even features a game! (17-Bit)

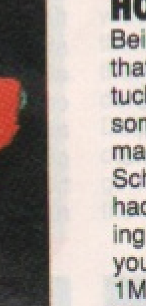


SPEED LIMIT

If you've got a couple of meg handy you'll be able to check out this excellent animation. It resembles a cross between the Jap sci-fi cartoon, Akira, and Terminator 2, with plenty of high-speed motorbike action, as well as walls which 'morph into more bikes. Weird, dark and very, very good. (17-Bit)

COLOURS

Not all animations have to be produced in *DPaint* – Colours, from Devils, is created with fractals. What they've done is create a multi-coloured fractal landscape that moves at an incredible 50 frames every second and is amazing to look at. (17-Bit)



HOW TO RUN INTO A WALL

Being a nice sort of chap, and appreciating that not everyone has huge amounts of RAM tucked away, Eric Schwartz has produced some animations especially for 1Mb machines. How To Run Into A Wall is typical Schwartz humour which features, as if you hadn't guessed, one of his characters charging head-first into a wall. It's short, but what do you expect for 1Mb? There are a few more 1Mb productions from Eric so why not check them out? (PD Soft)

FRIDAY THE 13th

Here we find a collection of short digitised sequences taken from several Friday The 13th movies. Each one lasts only a few seconds before looping round, with the final scene showing Jason, the masked star, getting his comeuppence. (17-Bit, 1881)





OSCAR THE LEMMING

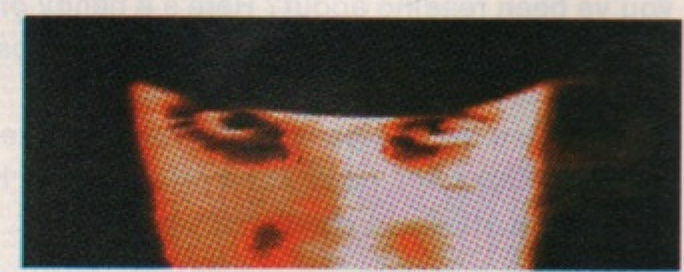
There's not much to merit technically in this animation, partly because the action takes place on a tiny display. What is does have going for it is humour. The question asked when you load it is 'where do Lemmings go when they fall off the screen?'. The answer is to the movies. Oscar, our Lemming hero, has a run in with a Lemming Darth Vader, green-haired Bill and Teds and many other notable film stars who have been Lemmingfied for this demo. (Virus Free)

SKUNKS AND HUNKS

Once again Amy the Squirrel takes the lead role in an Eric Schwartz demo. This time she's done up as a skunk. Guess how she wards off the advances of the amorous woodland animals. (17-Bit, 1284)

WEIRD PD

It's time to get weird. The great thing about PD is that nobody is in it for the money. That means people are free to experiment and let their imagination run wild. You have been warned...



Clock work Orangetion, caption, caption, caption, cap

NOT everything in the PD world can be categorised, or deserves to be. Sometimes programmers take a step sideways from digitising bits of videos, or 're-mixing' Shamen tracks, to produce something a little out of the ordinary. Here are a few of those disks...

GAMEBOY SIM ▲

You've shelled out for an Amiga. Four channel stereo sound, 4096 colours and those custom chips with the strange girly names. Time to see what it can do. Load this disk up and what do you get? A Gameboy simulator. Now you can play Gameboy *Tetris* complete with mono graphics and samples. (17-Bit)

ZX SPECTRUM SIMULATOR

Oh come on! Gameboys are one thing, but a Spectrum? Actually, if you ever owned one of these machines, you'll probably go through hell and high water to get your hands on this disk. Not only does it simulate Spectrum basic, it also comes with dozens of games such as *Manic Miner*, *Tir Nan Og* and *Chuckie Egg*. Time for a stroll down memory lane... (17-Bit)

WANDA FISH

Ever gone on holiday and come back to a fish bowl that resembles a septic tank with the slightly putrefied corpse of your beloved pet floating on top? Perhaps not, but here are some fish you can't kill. Boot Wanda Fish into Workbench and they'll happily form little schools and swim around in your windows. Sometimes one will get a little ambitious and journey to another window. If you're bored you can do the computer equivalent of dangling you finger in the water by making them follow the pointer. Wonderful. (17-Bit)

PEGASUS WORKBENCH HACKS

Face it, whoever designed the Workbench screen must lead a real interesting life. It's just so dull. Not for much longer though as this disk contains 60 (count 'em) completely pointless (and totally excellent) gadgets to brighten up your Workbench. How about a pair of eyes which sit in the corner and follow the progress of the pointer. Or the mouse-seeking missiles, which launch from time to time to chase the pointer around the screen. (NBS)

TETRACOPY

This disk is almost too clever to be included here. *Tetracopy* combines a useful copier with *Tetris*, so instead of fiddling about taking your mouse ball out while you're waiting for a disk to copy, you can now play *Tetris*. Isn't multi-tasking wonderful? (PD Soft)

I CHING

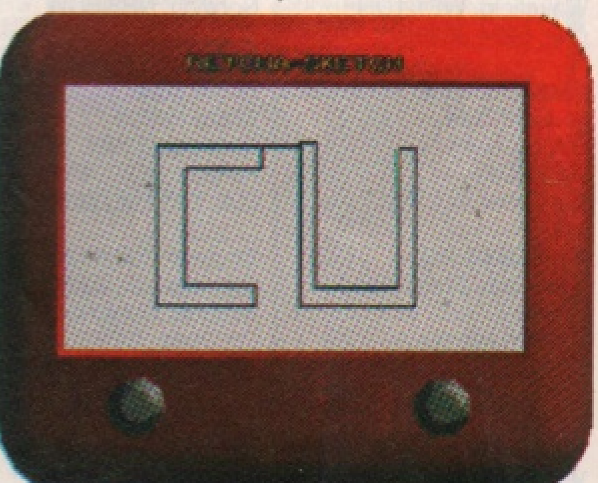
Why read your stars in newspapers when you can get your Amiga to predict the outcome of your life for you? In real life, the ancient Chinese art of I Ching involves hurling sticks around some kind soul's room then taking a reading of the pattern they fall in. All this has been done away with in the form of a random number generator on this disk, which goes to work and spouts out your destiny in only a few seconds. Marvellous. (Blitterchips)

GOLF SCORE ANALYSER

Got enough money and free time to play golf? You have?! Then why are you reading this? It's probably because you're a golf fanatic that this heading has caught your eye. Indeed, this is a disk catering for the minority who play golf, and the minority of golfers who feel it worthwhile to keep records of past performances. This program also prints out averages over several games, so you can see how well you're doing at beating that slice. (Valley PD)

RETCH-A-SKETCH

Did you ever have an Etch-A-Sketch when you were a kid? If you did, this program might appeal to you as it simulates the famous toy. If you're too young to remember it, Etch-A-Sketches where red boxes with two knobs and a silver front. By twisting the knobs lines would appear as if by magic (or as if by a magnet and iron filings). This program's so accurate that you even have to hit the fire button half-a-dozen times to shake the Retch-A-Sketch to clear your picture. (17-Bit)



An old children's favourite makes it to the Amiga.

THE CLOCKWORK ORANGE

Although the film's banned, this demo is alive and kicking. The strange choice of basing a demo on the Clockwork Orange is that of Brazzle Atkins, it features cuts from the script and digitised pictures from the film. If you can't find the video, this is the next best thing. (NBS)

WHERE TO BUY

Want to know where you can get hold of the disks you've been reading about? Here's a handy order form and a list of some of the many PD companies operating in and around the UK. After telephoming the company concerned to make sure of a disk's availability and price, just fill it in and send it off with a cheque or postal order.

While every attempt is made to ensure that the information we've printed in this guide is correct, obviously details can change. Please bear this in mind when ordering. Also, we'd like to point out that CU Amiga and Amiga Guide can in no way be held responsible for the non-fulfilment of orders by the companies listed on this page. To the best of our knowledge, all are professionally-run businesses who will endeavour to fulfil orders as speedily as possible.

PD LIBRARIES. The following companies are well-established libraries. Most of them stock a comprehensive range of disks and we've included their phone numbers so you can check the price of disks and Amiga compatibility before ordering.

17 Bit Software
1st Floor
2/8 Market Street
Wakefield, WF1 1DH
(Tel: 0924 366982)

16/32
35 Northcore
Strood, Kent
ME2 2DM
(Tel: 0634 710788)

Alpha 2000 PD
124 Kings Cross Road
Halifax
West Yorkshire
(Tel: 0422 345409)

Amigos
14 Windsor Road
Wanstead, London
E11 3QU
(Tel: 081 989 4357)

Amiga 500+ PD 3
Dunedin Crescent
Winshill, Burton-on-Trent
Staffordshire, DE15 0EJ
(Tel: 0283 516736)

Amiganuts United
12 Hinkler Road
Thornhill
Southampton.
(Tel: not available)

Anglia PD
Anglia House
115 Ranelagh Road
Felixstowe
Suffolk, IP11 7HN
(Tel: 0394 283494)

Battle Axe PD
125 Kingswood
Thorpe Marriott
Norwich, NR8 6UW
(Tel: 0603 261060)

Blitterchips
Chiffe House
Primrose Street
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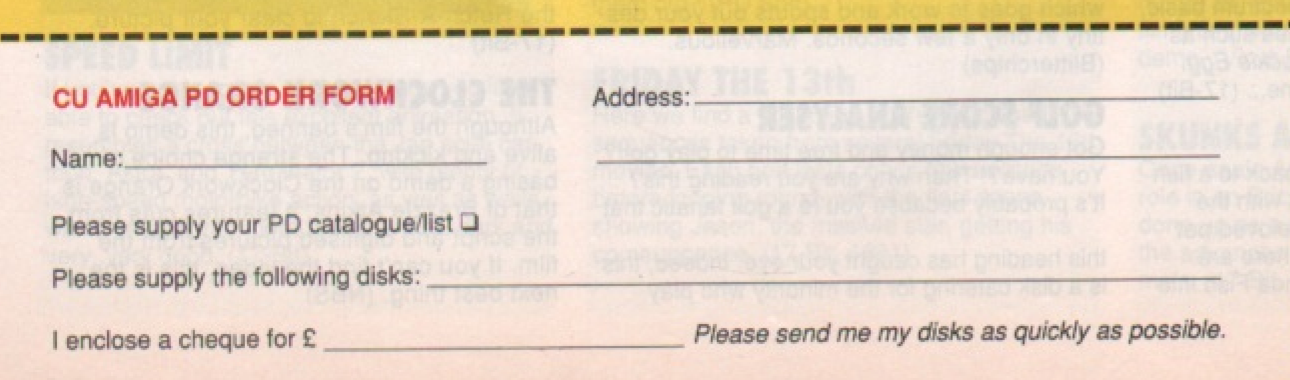
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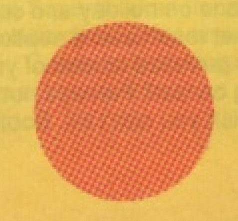
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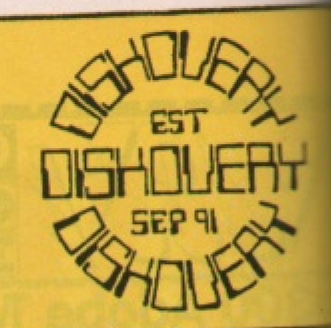


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